CHAPTER 1 – DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND

Effective organization and management of a school system requires cooperation and communication between elected members of the board, the superintendent (or the director of schools) and staff, and the governmental entity responsible for providing funding support. The board's role is to set goals and objectives for the school system in both instructional and operational areas, establish governance policies, approve plans to implement those policies, and work with the governmental entity to provide the funding necessary to implement those plans. The staff is responsible for managing day-to-day implementation of the plans approved by the board, and recommending the appropriate modifications to ensure the system operates effectively. The superintendent, as the chief executive officer of the system, recommends staffing levels, programs, and the amount of resources necessary to operate the system and accomplish the board's goals and objectives. The governmental entity is responsible for adopting the budget approved by the board and approving any amendments resulting in changes to the originally adopted budget.

To effectively evaluate the organization and management of a school system, we review the following functional areas:

- governance;
- planning;
- district management;
- school management;
- communications; and
- community involvement.

The interrelationship between these six functional areas contributes to the effectiveness of the overall organization and management of any school system.

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (the School System), officially formed in 1963 with the consolidation of the City of Nashville and Davidson County Schools, is one of 65 departments in the Metropolitan Nashville Government. The Metropolitan Nashville Council, which consists of 40 council members and the mayor of Nashville, performs the primary governance and administrative functions for the Metropolitan Nashville Government. The Metropolitan Nashville Council is

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- The director of schools is a skilled leader, who is well-respected by the board and stakeholders within and outside the School System.

- A broad range of comprehensive academic and social support programs administered by the Family and Community Partnerships Department enable students and families to overcome personal challenges, thereby enhancing student achievement and personal success.

- The School System has an opportunity to reduce school administrative costs by periodically evaluating its assistant principal staffing allocations.

- Completing the design of a performance dashboard would enable the school board to effectively monitor initiatives to improve student achievement and operational performance included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student, the School System's five-year strategic plan.

- The School System's internal communications plan would be more effective if it included strategies and tactics to communicate key messages, initiatives, and directives from executive leadership team meetings to employees throughout the system.

- Adopting a systemwide coupon book sale fundraiser could provide $1,000,000 in additional revenue on an annual basis that could be used on projects targeted toward improving student academic performance.

the legislative authority that authorizes and approves the School System's operating and capital budgets, as the board of education (the board) has no taxing authority.

The School System encompasses a 533 square mile area and is the second largest school system in the state of Tennessee, and the 42nd largest school system in the United States, with 82,863 students in 157 schools; 6,326 teachers and certified staff; and 3,795 support staff. The School System has an ethnically diverse student population, which is 45 percent African American; 32 percent Anglo; 19 percent Hispanic, and 4 percent Asian. Its student population also includes 22,291 English Learners and 55,076 economically disadvantaged students.

Article 9 of Part I– Charter of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee details the governance and administration of the School System within the Metropolitan Nashville Government structure. Accordingly, a nine-member elected board of education governs the School System and appoints the director of schools, who manages the day-to-day operation and administration. The School System's Amended Operating Budget for 2013–2014 totaled $746,420,300 for approximately 8,476 full-time equivalent positions, and its Capital Budget for 2013–2014 totaled $95,042,000. **Exhibits 1-1** and **Exhibit 1-2** present the School System's Amended Operating and Capital Budget, respectively, for 2013–2014.

Exhibit 1-1
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Amended Operating Budget for 2013–2014

Budget Line Item	2013–2014 Amended Positions	2013–2014 Amended Budget
Administration	121.0	$ 13,508,700
Leadership and Learning	7,140.9	526,877,200
Attendance and Social Services	95.0	6,859,000
Transportation	842.0	36,021,000
Operation of Plant	64.0	63,116,400
Maintenance of Buildings	208.5	18,636,000
Fixed Charges	-	39,897,100
Adult and Community Services	4.5	450,600
Subtotal	**8,475.9**	**$ 705,366,000**
Operating Transfers to Charter Schools	-	39,454,500
Reimbursable Projects	-	1,599,800
GRAND TOTAL	**8,475.9**	**$ 746,420,300**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Amended Operating Budget, 2013–2014.

Exhibit 1-2
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Capital Budget for 2013–2014

| Project	Estimated Cost
SCHOOL ADDITIONS AND NEW BUILDINGS	
Antioch Cluster New Elementary School (800)	$16,899,000
Granbery Elementary School 12 CR Addition	3,079,000
Madison Middle School 12 CR Addition	3,105,000
Maxwell Elementary School 12 CR Addition	3,079,000
Shayne Elementary School 12 CR Addition	3,079,000
Waverly Belmont Elementary School Addition (600) and Renovation	8,500,000
Sub Total	**$37,741,000**
SCHOOL RENOVATIONS AND REPLACEMENTS	
Goodlettsville Middle School Replacement (800)	$20,176,000
Julia Green Elementary Site Improvements	275,000
McGavock High School Fire safety Improvements	750,000
Sub Total	**$21,201,000**
DISTRICTWIDE PROJECTS	
ADA Compliance and Accommodations	$1,000,000
Asbestos, Environment Abatement	1,000,000
Asphalt Paving	1,000,000
Bus Replacement	3,000,000
Casework, Furniture, and Lab Upgrades	1,000,000
Emergency Maintenance, Entry Vestibules	1,200,000
HVAC Upgrades and Replacements	5,400,000
Plumbing and Boiler Upgrades	2,500,000
Roof Repair and Replacement	3,000,000
Security Upgrades	5,000,000
Stadium, Track, and Lighting Upgrades	2,000,000
Technology	10,000,000
Sub Total	**$36,100,000**
GRAND TOTAL	**$95,042,000**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Capital Budget, 2013–2014.

Dr. Jesse Register, director of schools, leads the School System and manages its day-to-day operation and administration through an executive leadership team consisting of line executives and members of his staff serving as his assistants. Dr. Register's direct reports and assistants on his staff comprise the School System's executive leadership team. The central office is organized by functional area, while 73 elementary schools, 33 middle schools, 25 high schools, four alternative schools, four exceptional education schools, and 18 charter schools. The School System is organized into 12 contiguous clusters that represent specific school zones and related feeder patterns through which students matriculate from elementary school through high school. **Exhibit 1-3** presents the current organization for the School System.

In 2009, the School System was on the verge of state takeover because of low-performing schools, and had not met performance standards contemplated by the federal government's No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 for six years. According to Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student, the School System's strategic plan, an "organization of mistrust and a negative public perception" further compromised and challenged the School System, requiring the director to initiate an "innovative and aggressive" systemwide reform effort in May 2009 known as "Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves." The Annenberg Institute for School Reform (Annenberg Institute) described Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves as "reforms developed collaboratively through nine 'Transformational Leadership Groups' consisting of central office administrators, principals, teachers, community leaders, and parents who were asked to review data, best practices, and research to develop reform proposals in eight specific areas."

The School System qualified for a $40,000,000 Race to the Top grant from the U. S. Department of Education, which is a contest created to encourage innovative reforms in state and local school system K-12 education. With this funding, the School System applied "significant support and resources to reform initiatives targeted to improve the system's collaborative culture, and increase student achievement across all subgroups of students."

Exhibit 1-3
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Current Organizational Structure
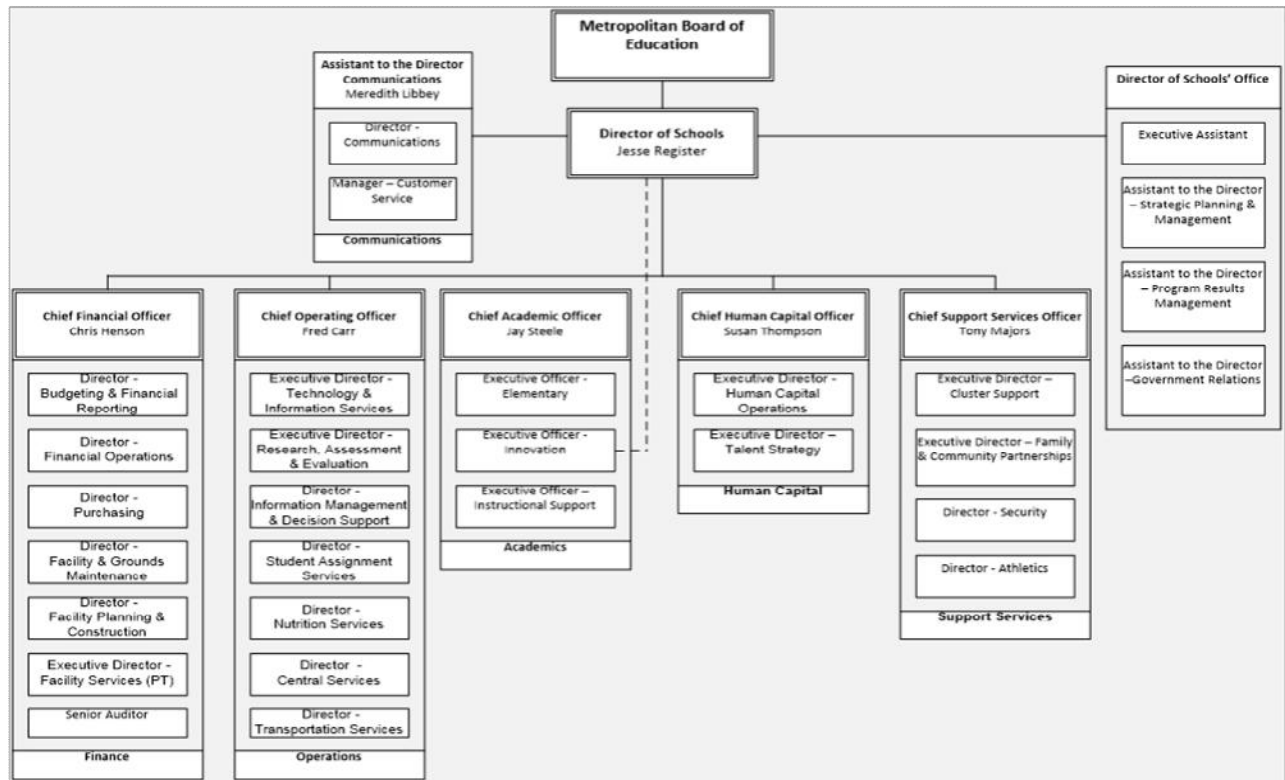
Source: Director of Schools, last revised January 10, 2014.

Since 2009, the School System experienced success in a number of areas, including posting academic gains each year and changing the culture of the system by enhancing collaboration at all levels. To further enhance collaboration at the executive level, in January 2013, the director restructured the School System's organization, modifying his span of control by reducing the number of his direct reports to five from 10, and reducing his cabinet to eight members. Since the director of schools assumed leadership of the School System and initiated its systemwide transformation through Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves, a number of consulting or policy–research organizations have reviewed and evaluated the School System's initiatives, including the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University, the Tribal Group, and the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. These reviews primarily evaluated instructional delivery and student performance, but also included the reorganization of the central office, communication and collaboration throughout the School System, and changes to the culture to support reform initiatives. **Exhibit 1-4** presents a summary of the reviews and evaluations of reform initiatives conducted since the director of schools initiated the School System reform initiatives in May 2009.

Exhibit 1-4
Consulting/Policy-Research Organizations Evaluating Reform Initiatives

Organization	Report Title	Date	Description
Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University	MNPS Achieves – An Evaluation Report	December 2010	Report began a two and one-half year documentation of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves, designed to capture reform as it was evolving. Provides a detailed description of reforms to date, identifies implications for the School System, and describes how the Annenberg Institute is continuing to monitor the reform effort as it deepens in the 2010-2011 school year. Key findings are related to the structure and function of Transformational Leadership Groups and changing the culture of the School System.
Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University	MNPS Achieves Year 2 – An Evaluation Report	November 2011	Report focused on the oversight team consisting of nine Transformational Leadership Groups; collaborative culture and capacity building; and shared understanding of effective teaching and learning.
Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University	MNPS Achieves Year 3 – An Evaluation Report	November 2012	Report documented preliminary findings from surveys of central office staff, building administrators, and Transformational Leadership Group members, as well as individual interviews and principal focus groups. Report outlined accomplishments, areas of progress and remaining need, and issues with reforms moving forward.
Lynch School of Education at Boston College	A Report on the Inspirational Schools Partnership with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	August 2012	Report is an interim review of the Inspirational Schools Partnership of the Tribal Group, and is based on 19 interviews conducted with people influential in leading and implementing the Inspirational Schools Partnership strategy in the School System. Key findings are related to empowering educators to take greater ownership of school improvements and innovation, as well as the culture in the School System's central office.

Exhibit 1-4
Consulting/Policy-Research Organizations Evaluating Reform Initiatives (Cont'd)

Organization	Report Title	Date	Description
Tribal Group	A Report on the Progress and Next Steps for the Inspirational Schools Partnership	December 2012	Report provides findings from analyzing educational outcomes throughout the entire School System, as well as direct review work with 34 high-priority schools. The report also includes key findings from the report issued by the Lynch School of Education at Boston College. Two of the four main findings are related to central office support and school management and accountability.

Source: Actual Reports from Annenberg Institute for School Reform, Lynch School of Education, and the Tribal Group provided by Metropolitan Internal Audit.

Each of the reports included in **Exhibit 1-4** credited the School System's reform initiatives with positive changes in culture and school accountability, and marginal changes in communication and collaboration, which continue to be a work in progress.

BEST PRACTICES

Best practices are methods, techniques, or tools that have consistently shown positive results, and can be replicated by other organizations as a standard way of executing work-related activities and processes to create and sustain high performing organizations. When comparing best practices, similarity of entities or organizations is not as critical as it is with benchmarking. In fact, many best practices transcend organizational characteristics.

McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP (the review team) identified 33 best practices against which to evaluate the organization and management of the School System. Of the best practices in this section, 24 were met and nine were not met. **Exhibit 1-5** provides a summary of these best practices. Best practices that the School System does not meet result in observations, which we discuss in the body of the chapter. However, all observations included in this chapter are not necessarily related to a specific best practice.

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
1.	**Governance.** The roles and responsibilities of the board and superintendent are clearly defined, and board members and the superintendent have policies to ensure that they have effective working relationships.	X		The board adopted the John Carver Policy Governance® model in 2003, which clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of the board and director of schools. **See Observation 1-A**.
2.	**Governance.** The board works collaboratively and effectively to fulfill their responsibilities for school system governance and oversight.		X	The board has a slight undercurrent of mistrust because a few of its members interfere in the day-to-day operations of the School System. **See Observation 1-B.**
3.	**Governance.** The board and school system leaders work effectively with each other and with educational partners, including schools, unions, state-level associations and parent groups.		X	The board and School System leaders work well together; however, there are board members who are concerned with the negative impact of charter schools on the School System's budget. Failure to meet this best practice did not result in an observation because the situation is politically-charged and the report has a section on the impact of charter schools on the School System.

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
4.	**Governance.** The board and superintendent have established written policies and routinely update those policies to ensure they are relevant and complete.	X		After adopting Policy Governance®, the board and director of schools implemented board policies related to Governance Process, Board/Director Relationship, Executive Expectations, and End Results for Children. **See Accomplishment 1-A**.
5.	**Governance.** The superintendent provides skillful leadership focusing, on providing a critical link between the school system and schools, and the school system and the community.	X		The director of schools is a leader who stabilized the School System, pointed it in the right direction, and earned the respect and trust of the board, staff, and community. **See Accomplishment 1-B and Accomplishment 1-E**.
6.	**Planning.** The school system has a multi-year strategic plan developed using a systematic planning process that engages relevant stakeholders.	X		The director of schools and his executive leadership team developed the system's five-year strategic plan, Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student with input from the board and stakeholders throughout the Nashville community to develop the mission, vision, and beliefs used to develop the plan. However, some board members reported they provided feedback for the School System's vision, mission, and beliefs in board work sessions rather than through a formal visioning process. **See Observation 1-F**.
7.	**Planning.** The strategic plan serves as a guide for the school system and its schools, specifying vision, mission, performance goals, objectives, and benchmarks and the policies to achieve each strategic objective.	X		The board, director of schools, and the executive leadership team use Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student as a roadmap to accomplish the goals for student and system performance included in the strategic plan. **See Accomplishment 1-C**.

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
8.	**Planning.** The school system links its financial plans and budgets to its annual priorities in the strategic plan and its goals and objectives; and focuses resources towards achieving those goals and objectives.	X		The director of schools, working with the board and executive leadership team establishes budget priorities linked to strategies to achieve goals and objectives included in the strategic plan. **See Accomplishment 1-C**.
9.	**Planning.** The strategic plan is communicated effectively, leads to understanding, support and action, and is evaluated for effectiveness.		X	The School System has not effectively communicated the strategic plan and related expectations internally. **See Observation 1-G**.
10.	**District Management.** The school system's organizational structure has clearly defined units and lines of authority that minimize administrative costs.	X		The School System's organization structure has clear lines of authority in a relatively flat organization that minimizes administrative costs. **See Accomplishment 1-D**.
11.	**District Management.** The school system's organizational structure is designed to support student achievement and district goals.	X		The director of schools restructured the School System's organization to support student achievement and enhance accountability. **See Accomplishment 1-D**.
12.	**District Management.** The school system's organizational structure is characterized by positive, collegial working relationships.		X	Communication among members of the executive team and between the central office and schools is a continuing challenge. **See Observation 1-H**.
13.	**District Management.** The School system periodically reviews its administrative staffing and makes changes to eliminate unnecessary positions and improve operating efficiency.	X		The director of schools and members of the executive leadership team continue to review administrative staffing each budget cycle as part of its process for monitoring the strategic plan. **See Observation 1-O, 1-P**.

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
14.	**School Management.** The school System has clearly assigned school principals the authority they need to manage their schools effectively while adhering to systemwide policies and procedures.		X	The School System is in the initial stages of implementing school autonomy, as the director of schools piloted 17 schools in 2013–2014 to begin phasing in school autonomy over three years. The majority of principals must still work through the Leadership and Learning Division in the central office to make certain decisions. **See Observation 1-M, 1-N.**
15.	**School Management.** The school system has a process that allows staff, parents, and community members at the campus level to be involved in school system decision-making.		X	The School System does not have a structured school-level process that allows the community their schools serve to participate in School System decision-making. Also, the director of schools has a Parent Advisory Council that meets every other month at the system level. **See Observation 1-L**.
16.	**School Management.** The school system holds school administrators accountable for their performance in achieving school, system, and state educational goals.	X		Through its lead principal network, the School System uses executive and network lead principals to mentor, coach, and evaluate school principals. **See Accomplishment 1-F.**
17.	**Communications.** An effective administrative infrastructure is in place to promote and support internal and external communication to stakeholders and constituents.	X		The Communications Department has an effective organizational structure that is appropriately staffed. Staff members understand their roles and responsibilities and are effective at communicating to stakeholders overall. **See Accomplishment 1-H**.
18.	**Communications.** A documented Communications plan exists to drive and ensure effective communication to both internal and external stakeholders.		X	While the Communications Department has developed a Communications plan, it lacks goals, objectives, and quantifiable measures. Additionally, no process is in place to evaluate the plan and obtain feedback from stakeholders. **See Accomplishment 1-H**.

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
19.	**Communications**. The school system has an extensive list of key stakeholders that represent a broad cross-section of parents, community/civic/business and political leaders that it can draw upon for stakeholder input when needed.	X		The Communications Department maintains a broad list of community stakeholders for the purpose of community outreach. This list was provided to the review team and utilized to obtain stakeholder input to evaluate the School System's and the department's constituency base.
20.	**Communications**. The school system consistently engages in effective two-way communications and strives to provide transparent information to stakeholders.	X		The Communications Department has documented evidence of a broad range of communications channels used to reach stakeholders. The Customer Service unit within the department also assists with ensuring stakeholders obtain needed information expeditiously and have a formalized vehicle for prompt problem resolution.
21.	**Communications**. Critical oral, written, and electronic communication is disseminated in the native language of non-English speaking parents when appropriate.	X		The Communications Department provides a wealth of information to stakeholders via the website, flyers, robo calls, and social media in multi languages.
22.	**Communications**. The school system has a procedure in place that it is in compliance with processing public information requests.	X		The Communications Department is responsible for responding to requests filed pursuant to the Tennessee Open Records Law and has a process to ensure compliance with the law. Thirty-three formal requests for information were received from August 2013 through January 2014 and all but one request was processed within the required timeframe.
23.	**Communications**. The school system has a crisis communication plan in place.	X		The Communications Department has a "stand alone" Crisis Management plan and crisis management protocols are also addressed in the department's 2013 Communications Guide.

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
24.	**Communications**. The school system regularly evaluates communication strategies and functions to ensure effectiveness.		X	The Communications Department has no formal process in place for evaluating existing communications strategies. **See Observation 1-Q.**
25.	**Communications**. The school system has a feedback mechanism in place to gauge stakeholder perceptions of communication effectiveness.		X	The Communications Department has no formal process in place for obtaining feedback from stakeholders. **See Observation 1-Q.**
26.	**Community Involvement.** The school system has an effective administrative infrastructure in place to promote and support effective parent and community involvement initiatives.	X		The Family and Community Partnerships Department has a comprehensive complement of community involvement programs.
27.	**Community Involvement.** Major community involvement programs such as parental advocacy and academic/ social support service organizations are in place to facilitate positive academic performance/achievement.	X		The Family and Community Partnerships Department has created and implemented a wide variety of support services. These include: the Community Achieves Program, Parent University, Hero Program, Bringing Justice to You, Before and After School Programs, and Career and Family Resource Centers.
28.	**Community Involvement.** The school system has established a strong network of community and business partners to leverage valuable resources.	X		Several key local Nashville organizations such as Alignment Nashville, PENCIL Foundation, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, Nashville Afterschool Alliance, and the Mayor's Office of Children and Youth, and representatives from the majority of Nashville higher education institutions and local business partners work together to provide education-based community support services for the School System.

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
29.	**Community Involvement.** The school system has established policies, procedures, and guidelines for parent and community volunteers including background checks and volunteer training requirements to ensure both the volunteers and schools have a positive experience in a safe and secure environment.	X		The PENCIL Foundation provides this service for the School System. PENCIL assists the School System with securing volunteers, conducting background checks, training volunteers and school staff, as well as policies and procedure to guide and facilitate working together.
30.	**Community Involvement.** Each school has a complement of parent volunteers and community partners that provide additional support and resources for learning.	X		While PENCIL assists all schools with securing volunteers and community partners, many schools have Parent Advisory Committee members and many do not. Parent Advisory Committee members serve a useful role in providing input for individual school needs. **See Accomplishment 1-K.**
31.	**Community Involvement.** The school system has a tracking mechanism in place to document the number of volunteers, volunteer hours, and monetary and in-kind donations contributed.	X		The PENCIL Foundation performs this function for the School System. **See Accomplishment 1-K.**
32.	**Community Involvement.** The school system has an external fundraising unit to assist with soliciting and attaining donations and contributions to supplement/expand resources.	X		The Nashville Public Education Foundation performs this function and has raised more than $12,000,000 over the past five years for the School System. **See Accomplishment 1-L.**

Exhibit 1-5
Summary of Best Practices - District Organization and Management (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
33.	**Community Involvement.** The school System evaluates community involvement programs on an annual basis to ensure effectiveness.	X		The Family and Community Partnerships Department has established goals and measures success against these goals. The Department evaluates the largest of its programs on a regular basis. However, the evaluation process could be further improved by measuring the cost effectiveness of its programs to ensure staff and other resources are used optimally. **See Observation 1-S**.

Source: McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP Review Team.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-A

The board adopted John Carver's Policy Governance® model in 2003 in an effort to improve its existing governance structure and enable the board to focus on larger issues confronting the School System.

The Policy Governance® model is essentially a "hands-off" governance model in which the board sets broad policy parameters, allows the director of schools to freely operate within those parameters, and holds the director of schools accountable for results.

After adopting John Carver's Policy Governance® model, the board customized the model to best fit its needs-restructuring its policies to reflect the guiding principles of Policy Governance® and integrating those principles throughout board policies divided into four categories:

- Governance Process (GP Policies) – How the board will do its job.
- Board/Director Relationship (B/DR Policies) – Includes evaluation expectations for the director of schools.
- Executive Expectations (EE Policies) – Sets administrative expectations.
- End Results for Children (E Policies) – Desired outcomes for children.

The board policies clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the board and director of schools, and define the board's expectations of the director of schools. For example, policies related to the Governance Process and Board/Director Relations are the responsibility of the board and policies related to Expectations and End Results for Children are the responsibility of the director of schools. The board reviews its Governance Process and Board/Director Relationship policies annually, while it monitors Executive Expectations and End Results for Children policies through the director of schools' work.

By clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the board and director of schools, and articulating those roles and responsibilities in well-constructed policies, the School System's board encourages and sustains an effective, team-oriented working relationship.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-B

The director of schools is a skilled leader who is well respected by the board and stakeholders within and outside the School System.

Dr. Register joined the School System in January 2009 when it was on the brink of state takeover because of low performance of a majority of the schools within the system. The director of schools stabilized the School System's bureaucracy, leading it to place in the state of Tennessee's second highest achievement category for public schools in 2013, placing it in the top third of Tennessee school districts.

One board member said: "the director of schools is trusted by the board because he is an effective leader, good manager, and an excellent communicator—there are no secrets with him. He understands the need to keep the board informed at all times. The board had the right person at the right time; the School System is positioned for success."

A majority of board members spoke admiringly of how skillfully the director of schools navigated the perilous political waters engulfing the internal and external stakeholder communities, gaining the confidence of central administrators, principals, teachers, parents, community members, and members of the business community. Further, the director of schools devoted considerable resources to the Inspirational Schools Partnership with the Tribal Group and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University to strengthen the link between the central office and schools through innovative programs to boost student achievement.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-C

In September 2013, the board adopted *Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student*, the School System's comprehensive five-year strategic plan that the director of schools and executive leadership team created in collaboration with the board and the stakeholders.

The strategic plan is the culmination of extensive reform efforts to improve student achievement and restore the credibility of the School System. It clearly articulates the vision and mission of the School System, emphasizes "personalized learning" as a lever of change, and includes specific student performance and system performance goals to be achieved using three distinct strategies: 1) quality teaching; 2) equity and excellence; and 3) transformational leadership. The plan outlines three specific objectives for each strategy that are linked to the student and system performance goal categories.

The School System uses its strategic plan as a guide to ensure all schools and central office divisions tailor activities to achieve student and performance goals to execute the mission, vision, and beliefs. The plan seamlessly links student performance goals and objectives to measurable outcomes, and all division budgets. Accordingly, the School System uses the strategic plan to establish annual priorities, and it allocates budget resources based on those priorities.

Comprehensive strategic plans are important because they enable the School System to focus on specific goals and objectives, and the strategies necessary to achieve them. Measurable outcomes and key performance indicators included in the plan allow the managers and executive leadership team to monitor actual versus planned performance.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-D

The director of schools restructured the School System's organization to support student and system performance goals included in the long-term strategic plan.

The director of schools reorganized the School System to support student achievement and system performance goals included in the strategic plan in January 2013. The old organization did not effectively support Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student, which is the culmination of reform efforts underway in the School System since May 2009. Under the previous organizational structure, the director of schools had a span of control of nine direct reports, plus a director of Communications on staff. This span of control did not reflect a coordinated effort for student achievement and did not include functions to coordinate accountability for measurable outcomes to improve student achievement and operational performance. **Exhibit 1-6** presents the School System's previous organizational structure.

Exhibit 1-6
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Previous Organizational Structure
December 2012
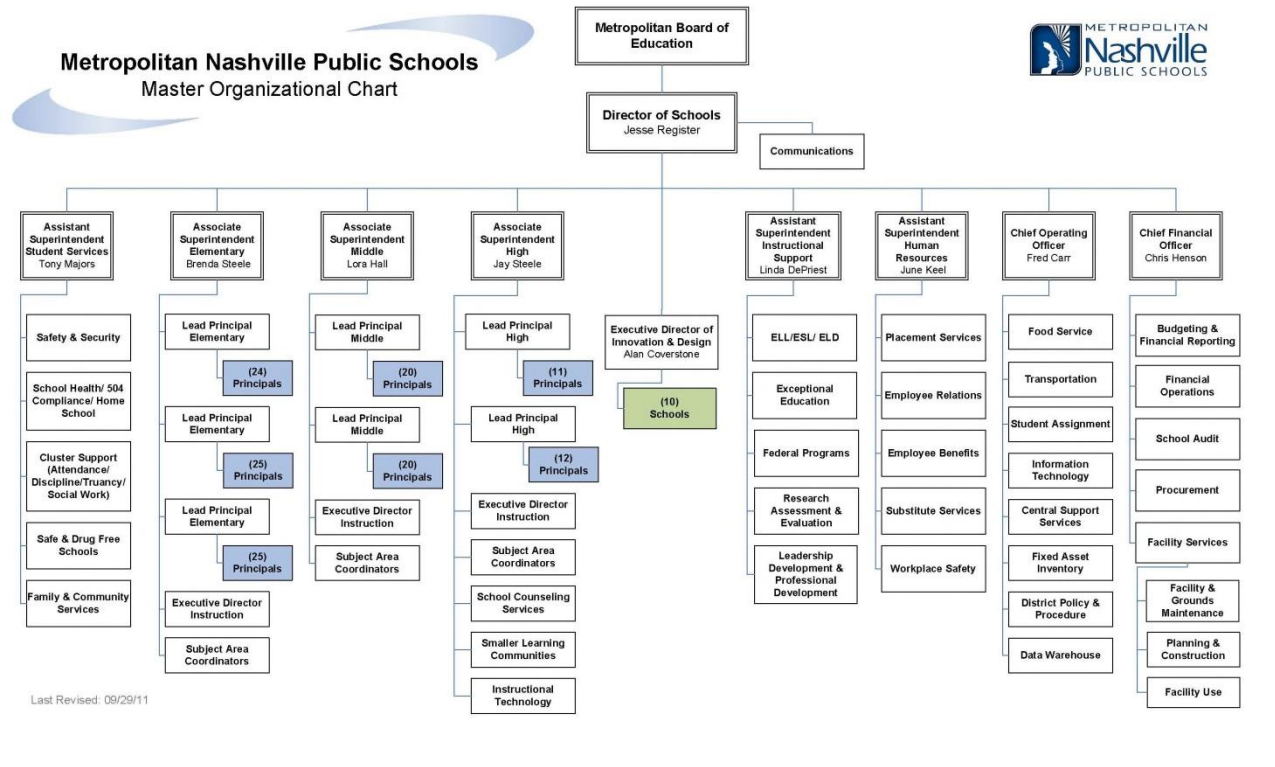
Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of the Director of Schools, June 2014.

The director of schools restructured the previous organization to establish one unit to oversee all schools and innovative teaching and learning, with other School System departments designated as support services units and expanded the organization to include a strategic planning and management function, as well as an accountability and program results management function. **Exhibit 1-3,** presented earlier in this chapter, is the School System's restructured organization which achieves the following goals:

- consolidates all schools, teaching and learning functions, and the Office of Innovation (which works with charter schools) in the academic unit under the oversight of a chief academic officer who reports directly to the director of schools;

- designates all other operational functions as units providing support services to achieve student performance and system performance goals included in the strategic plan;

- creates a strategic planning and management function within the Office of the Director of Schools to monitor the implementation of initiatives in the strategic plan;

- creates a program results management function within the Office of the Director of Schools to work with the executive leadership to provide accountability for results by developing key performance indicators to track and monitor measurable outcomes from initiatives included in the strategic plan; and

- reduces the span of control to five direct reports to the director of schools from 10.

The School System's restructured organization now reflects best practices as it has clearly defined units, clear lines of authority, and supports the implementation of strategic initiatives necessary to achieve student and system performance goals included in the strategic plan.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-E

The board designed a comprehensive evaluation tool that links the director of school's annual evaluation to measurable outcomes included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student, the School System's five-year strategic plan.

The board designed the director of school's two-part evaluation tool to assess his performance in executing strategies included in the School System's five-year strategic plan that continuously improve student, adult, and system performance outcomes. In Part I, the board, in collaboration with the director of schools, aligned the comprehensive evaluation tool with the five key outcome areas included in the strategic plan: 1) Student Performance; 2) System Performance; 3) Quality Teaching Strategy; 4) Equity and Excellence Strategy; and 5) Transformational Leadership Strategy. The evaluation tool gauges the director's performance in each of these areas with key performance outcomes related to 13 student outcome goals, three systemwide strategies, and nine objectives.

Each outcome area has specific, measurable outcomes that seamlessly link to school improvement plans and divisional action plans that include yearly targets, which determine the director of school's overall performance against expected goals and outcomes included in the strategic plan. These school improvement plans and divisional action plans form the foundation to quantitatively measure the director of school's performance in executing the elements of the strategic plan, which are equally linked to the School System's mission, vision, and beliefs.

Part II of the evaluation tool is a "Behavioral Competency" section that measures the director of school's competency with "soft skills," including:

- courage;
- leading transformational change;
- executive disposition;
- driving execution; and
- operational decision-making.

The benefits of this comprehensive, well-designed evaluation tool accrue to both the board and director of schools, as each contributed to and understands the foundation for managing expectations and evaluating the director of schools' performance. Moreover, linking the director of schools' performance to the system's strategic plan elevates student achievement, system performance, and enhances communication and trust between the board and director of school, which is essential to a productive working relationship.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-F

The School System implemented an innovative "school-to-school network" of lead principals to empower principals in the School System's most successful schools to serve as mentors for principals in elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the system.

The director of schools consulted with the Tribal Group, a consulting firm from the United Kingdom, to implement an innovative school-to-school network of outstanding principals who "use their skills and experiences to support schools in challenging circumstances." Branded as Network Lead Principals, the director of schools and chief academic officer modeled the network after the Raising Achievement Transforming Learning network in the United Kingdom, which successfully used mentors to bolster principals' confidence that real improvements could occur in their schools based on their knowledge and prior experiences.

The network lead principals concept, as designed for the School System, uses seven executive lead principals and 11 network lead principals to coach principals and ultimately improve student outcomes in schools led by the principals they mentor. These network principals are accountable for outcomes in their own schools, as well as for outcomes in the network schools with which they work. Because they have this accountability, the director of schools and chief academic officer provided these 18 principals with budget flexibility and the autonomy to staff their schools, select their assistant principals, and manage parental and community involvement.

Implementing a network of lead principals to serve as mentors for other principals throughout the School System has enabled all principals to learn from the collective experiences of the best and brightest school leaders. This practice also allows the chief academic officer to incrementally increase the leadership capabilities of principals. This increase in instructional and operational leadership capacity enables principals to efficiently manage their schools and instructional programs to boost student performance.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-G

The School System's Communications Department has created a Customer Service Center that provides parents and community members with quick access to information at an enhanced service level.

The Communications Department provides centralized information services to thousands of parents, community members, and employees through its Customer Service Center that operates using a call and walk-in visitor welcome center approach. Both the call and walk-in visitor center are located at the rear of the Central Administration Building. Based on the review team's experience evaluating this type of operation, most school systems have not implemented this type of sophisticated customer service operation. Typical assistance provided by the Customer Service Center includes processing information requests or resolving problems for the following:

- school system policies;
- teaching and learning standards;
- school registration for families new to Nashville;
- school choice outside of the zoned areas;
- bus transportation;

- school discipline issues;

- transcripts;

- home schooling;

- test results;

- summer school registration; and

- employment information.

On average, the Customer Service Center receives and responds to more than 130,000 calls and nearly 20,000 visitors during an academic school year. **Exhibit 1-7** provides a statistical summary comparison of the Center's operation for the first semester of both 2012 and 2013.

Exhibit 1-7 also provides a snapshot of the December 2012 and December 2013 comparison that shows a significant increase in call volume in 2013, and a decrease in the percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds. However, for the same snapshot for the entire first semesters of 2012 and 2013, there were fewer overall calls in 2013 with virtually identical percentages of calls abandoned or answered within 30 seconds.

Exhibit 1-7
Customer Service, Call Volume Comparison
1st Semester 2012 vs. 1st Semester 2013

Year	Calls Accepted	Calls Answered	Other*	Abandoned Calls	Percent Abandoned Calls	Percent Answered Within 30 Seconds
2012 December	5,827	5,358	4	465	8.0%	84.2%
2013 December	**7,357**	**6,391**	**21**	**945**	**12.8%**	**74.9%**
2012 1st Semester	67,920	62,059	45	5,816	8.6%	78.2%
2013 1st Semester	**64,098**	**58,393**	**46**	**5,659**	**8.8%**	**77.8%**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Communications Department, February 2014.
* The number of calls shown in the "Other" column represents calls unaccounted for in the statistics provided by the Customer Service Call Center.

Exhibit 1-8 disaggregates the category and general purpose of calls handled by the Call Center for the 1st semester of 2013. The highest number of calls is related to general requests for information, followed by calls related to student assignment, transportation, and schools.

Exhibit 1-8
Customer Service, Top Customer Contact Drivers
1st Semester 2013

Employee Services	General Request	Schools	Student Assignment	Transportation	Other Miscellaneous*	Total Calls Accepted
5,995	27,932	7,179	11,475	10,876	641	64,098
Human Capital	Department/ Employee	Registration	Optional School Application	Bus Stop ETA " (20% fewer)*	-	-
Employee Benefits	Student Records	Complaint	School Assignment	Bus Stop Information	-	-
Finger Printing	Directory Information	Calendar	Medical/Hardship Transfer Request	Bus Stop Request	-	-

* Notable drop in calls and tickets for Transportation compared to 1st Semester 2012.
* The "Other Miscellaneous" column includes calls that were not categorized into one of the top five contact drivers compiled by the Customer Service call center.

Additional customer contact drivers for the 1st semester of 2013 are shown below.

Walk-in Customer	Email	Outbound Call	Document Receipt	Student Records
9,380	1,452	1,830	3,004	2,168

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Communications Department, February 2014.

Exhibit 1-9 also provides data on the average business days needed to resolve calls for service or complaints. Further, it allocates the nature of the calls as seeking information, expressing concerns, or submitting complaints.

Exhibit 1-9
Customer Service, Resolution Response
1st Semester 2012 versus 1st Semester 2013

Semester Ticket Resolution Response	Average Business Days to all Ticket Resolution	Average Business Days to Complaint Resolution	Highest Number of Business Days Resolve Tickets Opened
Elementary Schools	4.2	5.1	23.7
Middle Schools	2.3	2.8	8.4
High Schools	1.5	1.8	9.2
Innovation Cluster	2.1	2.4	7.0
General Education Transportation	3.6	4.6	7.8
Exceptional Education Transportation	5.5	5.9	30.1
Systemwide 2012	2.9	3.4	-
Systemwide 2013	**3.6**	**4.2**	-

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Communications Department, February 2014.

The Communications Department actively encourages community members to use the Customer Service Center to obtain important information to kick-off the start of school. The department believes the smoother the school year starts, the more likely it will be successful. Accordingly, the Customer Service Center isolates operating statistics for two weeks prior and one week after school begins to get as much information out to parents and community members as possible.

Exhibit 1-10 documents that just over 50 percent of all calls during this high-volume demand period in both 2012 and 2013 were answered with very minimal wait time and that 66 percent of the calls were answered within 30 seconds.

Exhibit 1-10 reflects a slight reduction in demand in 2013 and solid maintenance of all performance standards for the three week period. This information is a reflection of the extra effort of the Customer Service Center and the School System, which may suggest that as customer needs are being met, fewer calls come into the call center and call volume declines.

Exhibit 1-10
Customer Service Center Report
Start of School Snapshot for Two Weeks Before and One Week after the Start of School
1st Semester 2012 vs. 1st Semester 2013

| Date	Calls Accepted	Calls Answered	Calls Answered With No Wait	Percent Calls Answered With No Wait	Total Abandoned Calls	Total Percent Abandoned Calls	Percent Calls Answered 30 Seconds
2012	16,825	14,569	8,584	50.9%	2,247	13.4%	66.4%
2013	15,751	13,643	7,981	50.4%	2,096	13.3%	65.9%
2012 to 2013	**(1,074)**	**(926)**	**(603)**	**(0.5%)**	**(151)**	**(0.1%)**	**(0.5%)**
8/1/2012	1865	1041	166	8.9%	820	43.9%	18.3%
8/1/2013	**1862**	**1215**	**250**	**13.4%**	**632**	**33.9%**	**25.1%**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Communications Department, February 2014.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-H

The School System's Communications Department has developed an extensive guide that provides clear direction on all aspects of internal and external communication.

Every employee of the School System has one exhaustive resource that provides quick and consistent guidelines that stress the importance of providing accurate and clear information to all stakeholders whatever the circumstances may be. Clear lines of authority are noted in the guide.

The Communications Guide addresses the importance of "honest and effective communications with everyone served – students, parents, teachers, support staff, business professionals, community organizations, elected officials, community leaders and the news media."
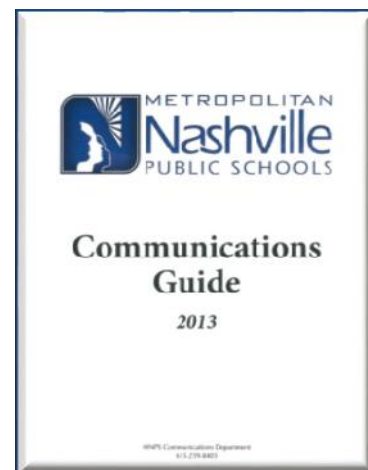
The document emphasizes that "every employee of the School System is part of the communications team" but not every employee is called upon to communicate directly on all matters of interest to the School System's stakeholder. Importantly, the introduction of the formal guide provides a direct contact for all employees to reach for guidance on any specific matter involving communications so that misinformation or miscommunication can be avoided.

The guide distinguishes between internal and external communications while providing insight into the different challenges each obligation presents. Moreover, the guide is extensive in addressing the scope of the challenges the School System faces in developing a plan that is both comprehensive and cohesive.

The strengths of the different components of the communications guide are highlighted in **Exhibit 1-11** and include the following:

Exhibit 1-11
Communications Guide, 2013

Summary of Communications Guide Content
• **Vision Statement** – Incorporates the duty of effective communications that engages all families, recognizes the responsibility of parents and caregivers to drive success for students, strengthens connections with the entire community to support all areas of student growth, and establishes effective two-way communications with parents and other stakeholders. Endorses the fundamental foundation of what guides effective communications: transparency and accountability.
• **Communications Staff** – Provides a valuable resource that gives detailed information including the names, positions, general duties, and contact numbers including email of the leaders and staff members of the communications' staff. Employees can turn to these individuals as needed for advice or referral of any matter involving communications.
• **Visual Identity – Getting The Look** – Provides visualization and branding as represented by logos, which are an important component of consistent, effective communications. The guide provides detailed instructions on the use of the School System's logos for both print and electronic usage.
• **The Academies of Nashville Logo Guidelines** – Establishes the same standards of branding for the School System itself apply to the Academies of Nashville. This program is an important component of the School System but it does have its own separate identity in terms of public perception that is incorporated into its own logo. Consistency is an important part of visual communications.
• **Designed Guidelines for Printed Items** – Provides rigorous design guidelines for printed items to accomplish this important function of communication. Provides explicit directions on matters of law that must be included in printed documents. Practical tips on document creation are provided and information including contact data about the School System's centralized printing and mail services are also given.
• **Board of Education** – Supplies names, positions, and contact information for each of the School System's board of education members. The ability of employees to communicate this basic information is important.
• **Website Publishing** – Establishes six distinct areas of responsibility including, accessibility, timeliness, accuracy, professionalism, relevance, and quality of writing. While each school and department is responsible for content posted to its website, key employees have been trained in website management and given oversight duties.
• **Publication Style Guide** – Encourages consistency in producing written documents for distribution to the public. Offers practical tips on grammar, use of acronyms, school board references, position titles, numerical usage and other common matters even including telephone protocols.
• **ParentLink** – Serves as a tool that allows the School System to schedule, send, and track personalized voice, email, and text messages to thousands of parents, faculty, and staff in minutes. Permits broad based communication or ones that are highly targeted on the basis of a wide variety of demographic factors. Offers explicit advice on the kinds and formats of messages that have proved to be the most effective for the technology employed. Potential users of Parent Link are provided contact information that can be accessed for assistance 24 hours a day.

Exhibit 1-11
Communications Guide, 2013 (Cont'd)

Summary of Communications Guide Content
• **Media Relations Guide** – Establishes an essential standard of discipline that governs interaction of employees with any news media outlet. Describes the actual number of individuals within the School System who have authority to speak to the news media on the expansive range of inquiries that are routinely submitted by the news media. Establishes a clear duty that employees who are contacted by reporters of any news media outlet for interviews, photography, or videotaping should be directed first to the Communications Office. Offers very practical tips to employees who do interview or interact with the news media. The strength of the School System's approach to media relations is at least two-fold. It protects the School System from being 'blindsided.' Offers employees well-reasoned and time-tested strategies that emphasize that honesty and forthrightness are always the best approaches in dealing with the news media.
• **Critical/Crisis Communications** – Prepares for sudden developments or even crisis that can happen on a second's notice. Provides detailed guidance including emergency contact numbers of appropriate officials or departments that must become engaged as quickly as possible. The government or legal issues governed by privacy laws. Emphasizes a process that should be implemented when such situations arise.
• **Special Events** – Notes occasions such as groundbreaking ceremonies, grand opening of schools, or other significant celebratory events offer an extraordinary opportunity to communicate positive news about the School System including the campus or group that is hosting the actual event. Encourages sponsors to develop and implement a strategic plan to maximize the communications opportunities that such occasions permit.
• **School List** – Provides a comprehensive contact list including the name and contact number for each principal in the School System (including photographs of individual school principals).

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Communications Department.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-I

The Communications Department effectively uses electronic and social media and multi-lingual outreach strategies to reach external stakeholders.

The School System uses a wide variety of electronic media vehicles such as the School System's website, multi-language social media blasts and accessing multi language television coverage to reach and communicate with School System stakeholders. The School System also effectively leverages print media to keep the public aware of its activities and events.

According to statistics maintained by the School System, its website received almost 1,000,000 page views during July and August 2013 alone. Individual school web pages have been recently updated to provide more information to parents and community members about academic performance at that particular school, community partners, and volunteer opportunities and efforts.

Local network and multi-language television stations routinely cover "first day of school" activities and all school board meetings are covered on a local cable channel. The Tennessean, the largest print media newspaper in Nashville, typically reports news stories about the School System once or twice per week.

Exhibit 1-12 shows that 53.1 percent of central administrators and 50.8 percent of teachers, respectively, agree or strongly agree that the School System's website has information for community members who want to be school volunteers. Response rates from principals/assistant principals were even higher at 73.1 percent for the same question. When asked about local television and radio station coverage, 57.8 percent of central administrators strongly agreed or agreed that local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus. Forty three percent of support staff strongly agreed or agreed with the same question as central administrators.

Exhibit 1-12
Communications Department Survey Results
Website, Local Television, and Radio Coverage

Question		Percentage Responses				
The district's web site has information for community members who want to be school volunteers.	Number of Survey Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
Survey Group						
Central Administrators	62	53.1%	28.1%	3.1%	15.7%	100.0%
Principals/Assistant Principals	104	73.1%	17.3%	4.8%	4.8%	100.0%
Support Staff	438	50.3%	27.4%	8.2%	14.1%	100.0%
Teachers	1,208	50.8%	28.7%	10.2%	10.3%	100.0%
Question		Percentage Responses				
The local television and radio stations regularly report school news and menus.	Number of Survey Respondents	Agree or Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
Survey Group						
Central Administrators	62	57.8%	15.6%	12.5%	14.1%	100.0%
Support Staff	438	43.1%	26.7%	7.9%	22.3%	100.0%

Source: McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP Surveys of Central Administrators, Principals/Assistant Principals, Support Staff, and Teachers, May 2014.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-J

The School System's Family and Community Partnerships Department has implemented a broad range of academic and social support programs targeted toward helping students and families to overcome impediments to educational and personal success.

One of the strongest areas of educational research confirms that increased parental involvement in children's educational lives through collaborative participation in public education produces benefits for students including lower dropout rates, higher graduation rates, and higher levels of preparation to succeed in post-secondary academic or career pursuits.

The School System's Family and Community Partnerships Department efforts are well-structured.

Guiding operational principles include:

- strong commitment to parent engagement;
- positive school environment and culture;

- comprehensive and effective communications between the school and home;

- parental educational programs that foster intellectually, socially, and emotionally healthy children;

- consistent and meaningful opportunities for parents to share their voice and insights with the school; and

- varied opportunities for parents to engage in meaningful and productive school activities.

Major Family and Community Partnership programs include:

- **Community Achieves** – Nineteen campuses throughout the School System target four key areas of engagement including College and Career Readiness, Family Engagement, Health and Wellness, and Social Services. These programs provide services for students, parents, and community members at-large. Resources include Family Resource Centers, health clinics, after-school programs, recreation, and adult education.

- **Parent University** – The program offers life skills recognizing that parents, guardians, or caregivers want their children to succeed in life. It also recognizes that parents sometimes need help to better understand what they can do from a very practical standpoint. Thus, the motto of Parent University is not just words: "Helping Parents, Helping Children."

- **Hero Program** – Over 2,700 homeless students have been provided clothing, school supplies, and other support to help the families keep their children attending school.

- **Bringing Justice to You** – Even minor misdemeanor criminal offenses can wreak financial havoc on families. This program helps family members expunge such offenses so that impediments to family support needs, such as steady employment, can be eliminated so that parents and students can have a productive life.

- **Before and After School Programs** – These programs serve many positive functions including helping parents meet obligations to employers knowing that their children are in a safe environment. Academic enrichment, homework, and recreation are supervised by professionals.

- **Career and Family Resource Centers** – There are 16 such centers in operation serving as a valuable partner in the lives of families in neighborhoods with significant needs. Partnerships with social service providers, schools, businesses, faith-based organizations, and others are located in the communities making access to service readily available.

- **Community Outreach Specialists** – The School System employs social workers that coordinate all of the services provided to students and their families.

- **D.O.G.S.** (Dads of Great Students) – Invites fathers, grandfathers, uncles, or other father figures to volunteer at least one day at the student's school during the year. It is a rigorously supervised program that has literally brought thousands of individuals who are important to the lives of students into the school as positive role models.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-K

The School System has successfully leveraged financial and operational support with key community partners that have provided a wide range of services and support to enhance educational opportunity and achievement for the students and families of the community.

Several key local Nashville organizations such as Alignment Nashville, PENCIL Foundation, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, Nashville Afterschool Alliance, and the Mayor's Office of Children and Youth, and representatives from the majority of Nashville higher education intuitions work together to provide education-based community support services for the School System.

Direct program planning and coordination support from Alignment Nashville and the PENCIL Foundation have touched every level of family and community involvement programs in the School System from elementary to secondary to a broad range of community outreach initiatives, which include the following:

- **Alignment Nashville** acts as a "convener" for the School System's family and community involvement initiatives by bringing together leaders from the business and civic community to problem solve and identify innovative approaches to meet the diverse needs of the schools. This organization has established 24 committees that brainstorm, plan, and help to garner resources for the School System.

- **PENCIL Foundation** has created a large network of businesses, organizations, and faith-based groups that have provided tutors, mentors, and general volunteers to help students succeed in the classroom. PENCIL's main responsibility is to assist with securing volunteers, conducting background checks, training volunteers and school staff, as well as policies and procedures to guide and facilitate working together. PENCIL also ensures that schools have the "right partners" to meet schools' needs. During the 2013 school year, PENCIL helped the School System to secure 829 partners which provided over 10,000 volunteers who contributed over 110,000 volunteer hours in over 150 school campuses, producing a community investment of over $2,400,000.

- **Nashville Higher Education Institutions** provide support through the involvement of over 40 presidents, deans, professors, directors, and administrative leaders of dozens of Nashville's institutions in a variety of programs and initiatives serving students, families, and professional staffs of the School System. Their efforts work to create strong valuable partnerships between the higher education community and the School System designed to improve educational opportunities by helping students develop an appreciation, vision, and commitment to achieving success in their academic lives.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 1-L

The Nashville Public Education Foundation has raised $12,257,000 over the past five years alone to support specific initiatives for the School System to provide supplemental educational opportunities for students from elementary through high school.

The School System is supported by an external foundation, founded in 2002, that primarily provides academic enrichment for students. **Exhibit 1-13** shows the extra financial support provided to the School System from the Foundation for the years 2009–2013.

Exhibit 1-13
Summary of Nashville Public Education Foundation
Financial Contributions from 2009 through 2013 ($ in Thousands)

Source: Nashville Public Education Foundation 990 Filings.

Examples of the programs supported by the Nashville Public Education Foundation include the following:

- Keep the Music Playing

  – The program was created by the Country Music Association's Artist Relations Committee. Since 2006, the effort has purchased over 4,000 instruments for School System students. The creation of Music Labs remains a high priority.

- Music Makes Us: The Nashville Education Project

  – The Office of Music Education was established in 2012-2013. The program director and staff have begun implementing music education curriculum across all grade levels. Nashville Mayor Karl Dean and the Music City Music Council define two key objectives to the program: 1) Support student learning in the School System, and, 2) Benefit the local music industry's long-term interests by developing a homegrown pool of future professionals and artists.

- One Step Ahead

  – This program provides critical financial tuition support allowing high school students to participate in dual enrollment classes at universities or community colleges. Earning college credit while in high school is both a future financial benefit to students and their families and creates incentive to successfully graduate from high school.

- Scholars Academy

  – This "no cost" program includes the summer academy for ninth graders to help prepare them to succeed in the rigorous high school environment. Monthly sessions continue throughout the school year for this group of scholars to encourage the development of those skills that will help them succeed in high school and lay the foundation for post-secondary success. The Scholars Academy is held at Cane Ridge High School, Glencliff High School, Maplewood High School, and Pearl-Cohn High School.

- The Academies of Nashville

  – Zoned high schools have been redesigned into smaller learning communities that focus on a career or academic theme delivered in a highly personalized learning community. Students explore multiple career choices; learn skills required in various industries; have an opportunity to meet potential employers through classroom presentations, formal internships, visits to various businesses, and job shadowing. The program is designed to produce immediate progress in lowering dropout rates and improving attendance. The percentage of students graduating on time, and having achieved college or career ready capabilities will be a longer term standard of measuring the program's success.

DETAILED OBSERVATIONS

GOVERNANCE

The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Public Education (the board) consists of nine members elected from single-member districts, each serving four year terms on a rotating basis. The terms are staggered so that no less than four members are elected every two years. Two students from the Student Advisory Council serve with the board, but have no vote. **Exhibit 1-14** lists members of the 2013-2014 board.

Exhibit 1-14
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Metropolitan Board of Education, 2013–2014

Board Member	Title	District	Term Expires	Occupation
Cheryl D. Mayes*	Chairperson	District 6	2014	Accountant
Anna Shepherd	Vice- Chairperson	District 4	2014	Payroll Manager
Sharon Dixon Gentry, Ed.D.	Member	District 1	2016	Healthcare IT Manager
Jo Ann Brannon, Ed.D.	Member	District 2	2014	Retired Educator, Adjunct Professor
Jill Speering	Member	District 3	2016	Retired Educator
Elissa Kim	Member	District 5	2016	Teach for America
Will Pinkston	Member	District 7	2016	Communications Professional
Michael Hayes*	Member	District 8	2014	Commercial Real Estate Developer
Amy Frogge	Member	District 9	2016	Attorney/Grant Writer

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Director of Schools Office, January 2014.
* Cheryl D. Mayes and Michael Hayes were replaced with new board members in the August 2014 school board elections.

The board meets the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month, except December when the board meets on the second Tuesday only. The board holds its regular meetings on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. in the boardroom of the Administration Building located at 2601 Bransford Avenue. On the fourth Tuesday of each month, the board holds formal work sessions, which are meetings that do not require action and are not considered business meetings. Board members use the work session to receive information for study and to interact with the director of schools and members of the executive leadership team to understand specific programs, initiatives, and issues that may come before the board. The board may call special meetings to conduct business between regularly scheduled board meetings.

The board executive secretary maintains a calendar of all board events, which she places on the School System's website that is continuously updated with adequate notice of the date, time, location, and agendas for meetings that involve two or more board members. The Public Information Office distributes media releases providing notice of regular and special meetings, and work sessions to all media entities, business contacts, community leaders, government agencies, and parents.

Members of the public are invited to attend all regular meetings and work sessions, but those wishing to address the board must do so only at the regular meeting. Accordingly, persons wishing to speak to the board about specific agenda items considered at the regular meeting must submit written requests to address the board to the board's executive secretary by 4:30 p.m. on the Friday before the regular meeting.

The chairperson of the board, vice chairperson of the board, director of schools, and the board executive secretary meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month to develop the agenda for the regular board meeting on the second Tuesday of each month. The chairperson of the board solicits individual board members for items they wish to place on the agenda; however, items placed on the agenda come from a variety of sources including suggestions from the director of schools, items presented by members of the director of schools' executive leadership team, and citizens. Items to be considered for the agenda must be submitted to the board executive secretary, with supporting background information, by 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday of the week before the regular board meeting.

Once chairperson, vice chairperson, and director of schools approve the final agenda, the board executive secretary emails an electronic portable document format file of the agenda packet to board members by 10:00 a.m. on the Thursday before the regular board meeting, which is five days before the scheduled meeting. The board executive secretary copies the director of schools on the email, electronically transmitting the agenda packet. Each board member has five days to contact the director of schools or members of his executive leadership team with any questions or clarifications they need about information in the electronic agenda packets.

Immediately after emailing the agenda packets to board members, the board executive secretary posts the actual agenda on the School System's website and notifies community members who signed up to receive board agenda updates via email informing them the agenda is available.

The board executive secretary prepares the official minutes of all board meetings. Board meetings and work sessions are recorded on video and the board executive secretary prepares official written minutes from the video tapes and forwards them to all board members with the agenda for the subsequent board meeting. Each board member reviews the minutes for accuracy and completeness prior to approval. The chairperson of the board and board secretary sign the official minutes following approval by the board and the minutes become a part of the public record.

In 2003, the board adopted John Carver's Policy Governance® model in an effort to improve its existing governance structure and enable the board to focus on larger issues confronting the School System. The Policy Governance® model is essentially a "hands-off" governance model in which the board sets broad policy parameters, allows the director of schools to freely operate within those parameters, and holds the director of schools accountable for results. In contrast with governance approaches boards typically use, Policy Governance® separates issues of organizational purpose (described in the model as "ENDS") from all other organizational issues (described in the model as "MEANS"), placing primary importance on those ENDS, which includes the necessity for the board to "speak with one voice."

After adopting John Carver's Policy Governance® model, the board customized the model to best fit its needs, seeking to create a culture that required high-level governance. Accordingly, the board restructured its policies to reflect the guiding principles of Policy Governance®, integrating those principles throughout board policies divided into four categories, which include the following:

- Governance Process (GP Policies): How the board will do its job;

- Board/Director Relationship (B/DR Policies): Includes evaluation expectations for the director of schools;

- Executive Expectations (EE Policies): Sets administrative expectations; and

- End Results for Children (E Policies): Desired outcomes for children.

Policies related to the Governance Process and Board/Director Relations are the responsibility of the board and policies related to Expectations and End Results for Children are the responsibility of the director of schools. The board reviews its Governance Process and Board/Director Relationship policies annually, while it monitors Executive Expectations and End Results for Children policies through the director of schools' work. Essentially, Executive Expectations policies cover the day-to-day operations of the School System, while End Results for Children policies are evaluated through test scores.

OBSERVATION 1-A

Some board members interfere with the day-to-day management and operations of the School System; thereby, violating the guiding principles of Policy Governance® incorporated in the board's policies. Board members who "overreach" into management and operations undermine the authority of the director of schools.

Exhibit 1-15 presents board members' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities, board communication, and trust summarized from interviews with each member.

Exhibit 1-15
Board Members' Perceptions of their Roles & Responsibilities, Board Communication and Trust

INTERVIEW QUESTION	MEMBER A	MEMBER B	MEMBER C	MEMBER D	MEMBER E	MEMBER F	MEMBER G	MEMBER H	MEMBER I
Do all board members understand their roles and responsibilities?	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Do board members interfere in day-to-day operations?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES	YES
Do board members generally trust each other?	NO, BUT IMPROVING	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
Do board members generally trust the director of schools?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Is communication between board members open and honest?	NO, BUT IMPROVING	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	YES

Source: Interviews of individual board members, February – March 2014.
Note: Board member perceptions recorded in this exhibit are as of the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2014; individual members' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities, board communication and trust could possibly change as a result of facts and circumstances occurring after June 30, 2014, and before the date the final report is released.

Although five of the nine board members felt all board members understand their roles and responsibilities, seven of the nine members believed there were board members who interfered with the day-to-day operations of the School System. Generally, board members who actively intrude in day-to-day operations and management of a school system do so because they have not been properly trained to perform their governance role. During interviews with members of the board, the majority of them cited

the lack of training as the catalyst for some of their colleagues' inclination to "overreach" into the management and operations of the School System.

In 1990, the Tennessee Legislature mandated that school board members be properly trained during their service on the board and gave the Tennessee State Board of Education (State Board) the responsibility to set the minimum requirements for training. The State Board requires that every board member participate annually in seven hours of training provided by the School Board Academy training program administered by the State Department of Education. All nine board members completed the minimum annual training requirements prescribed by the State Board.

Although members of the current board were not seated as a part of the board that adopted John Carver's Policy Governance® model, a former vice chairperson of the board, who also chaired the board's governance committee, provided an overview of Policy Governance® during a four-hour orientation for new board members. Additionally, a former chairperson of the board conducted a 45-minute review of Policy Governance during the Annual Board Retreat held on September 13–14, 2012, and a former board member again conducted a two-hour review of Policy Governance® during the Annual Retreat held on January 25–26, 2013. The board did not review Policy Governance® during its Annual Retreat held on January 24–25, 2014, but spent three hours and 15 minutes reviewing its Board Policy Manual to make suggestions for revisions, changes, or additions to current policies.

Despite reviewing the principles of Policy Governance® in the orientation for new board members and annually in board retreats, some board members interviewed by the review team stated that Policy Governance® is "complex" and preferred to have additional, targeted training in the nuances of implementing Policy Governance® in the School System. One board member felt the model to be restrictive when juxtaposed against board members roles and responsibilities, while another understood Policy Governance®, but felt it conflicted with board members' position as elected officials.

Dallas Independent School District adopted John Carver's Policy Governance® model in February 2000, three years before the board adopted the model for the School System. Dallas Independent School District Board members attended targeted training conducted by John Carver in an introductory session funded by the Dallas business community, and five separate training sessions funded by Dallas Independent School District *before* adopting the model. In this instance, board members obtained targeted, concentrated training in implementing and sustaining the Policy Governance® model that proved beneficial to individual board members.

RECOMMENDATION 1-A.1

Provide targeted training for members of the board related to their roles and responsibilities in adhering to Policy Governance® to reduce the instances of board members' involvement in day-to-day operations that undermines the director of schools' authority.

The chairperson of the board should closely monitor the continuing education hours obtained by members of the board and provide targeted training related to understanding their roles and responsibilities in the School System's Policy Governance® model. Monitoring the training activities of board members will also help the board identify governance techniques to sustain its Policy Governance culture. This will enable board members to effectively control management's job without meddling, thereby decreasing instances of board involvement in day-to-day operations and undermining the director of schools' authority.

John Carver and Miriam Carver are available to provide specific training in implementing the Policy Governance® model. PolicyGovernance.com, which is John Carver's authoritative website for the Carver Policy Governance model, lists a menu of training options for boards. Since the board is already using the Policy Governance model, the chairperson may want to consider targeted workshops offered by John and Miriam Carver through PolicyGovernance.com, which is described below:

- **Rehearsal Workshop** – An interactive one-day workshop that allows the rehearsal of board skill in policy use and decision–making. The skills taught enable long-term maintenance of the model.

- **Policy Governance® Academy** – Provides an intensive, advanced five-day learning experience for consultants and other leaders in the principles and application of Policy Governance®. Because it is an advanced training course, the Academy is available only to those who satisfactorily demonstrate an understanding of Policy Governance®.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation ranges from $800 per person for the Rehearsal Workshop, with a potential 20 percent discount for groups of four or more trustees [$800 x 9 = $7,200 x .80 = $5,760], to a minimum of $2,500 per person for the Academy. The board should first consider the Rehearsal Workshop until all of its members can demonstrate an understanding of Policy Governance®.

OBSERVATION 1-B

Five of the nine board members feel board members generally trust each other, while the remaining four board members cite a general atmosphere of distrust among board members which, when coupled with Tennessee's restrictive Open Meetings Act (Sunshine Law), some members feel, inhibits open and honest communication among board members.

The absence of open and honest communication could, and often does, contribute to ineffective decision-making and a proliferation of distrust among colleagues entrusted with the fiduciary responsibility to govern the School System.

The Sunshine Law [Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-44-102(b)(2)] statutorily defines a "meeting" as "the convening of a governing body of a public body for which a quorum is required in order to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision." The Sunshine Law [Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-44-102(b)(1)] further defines "governing body" as "any public body consisting of two (2) or more members, with the authority to make decisions for or recommendations to a public body on policy or administration." While at least three board members consider the Sunshine Law to be a "primary driver" of an atmosphere of distrust, the provisions of the statute tilt more toward hindering open and honest communication. In fact, **Exhibit 1-15** seems to validate the effect of Sunshine Laws on communication between board members when two board members who believe board members generally trust each other, contrastingly, believe communication between board members is not open and honest.

Based on interviews of board members, there are other issues driving the general atmosphere of distrust among board members. These issues include the board's divisive 5–4 vote not to approve the Great Hearts Academy charter school application and instances of board members interfering in the day-to-day management and operations of the School System. Moreover, according to one board member, in the board's annual retreat held on January 24–25, 2014, the board chairperson asked board members to

complete a survey of specific issues or problems requiring the board's attention. Board members ranked the board low in the areas of communication and trust.

When school boards have divisions among its members related to trust and open communication, individual board members must take personal responsibility to improve the overall environment of communication and trust among board members. It is often difficult because board members must first talk candidly with each other to determine the origins of poor communication and distrust (despite restrictive Sunshine Laws), and then make a concerted effort to change the environment. Typically, boards will hire a facilitator to conduct teambuilding sessions during which each board member will complete a personality profile, discuss their individual differences and challenges they have with each other, and participate in a number of teambuilding exercises designed to improve the overall communication and trust among board members. However, all board members must believe teambuilding can improve trust and communication and make individual commitments to actively participate in the training. While the School System's board conducts annual board retreats, none of the three retreats attended by the current governing board have included team building activities.

RECOMMENDATION 1-B.1

Conduct a series of teambuilding workshops to improve trust and communication among board members to enhance board deliberations for efficient and effective decision-making.

The board chair should schedule a minimum of two teambuilding sessions that are mandatory for all board members and the director of schools to attend. An experienced facilitator should lead each session, with the initial session incorporating the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Instrument assessment tools for all participants to help them better understand themselves and interact with others. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Instrument assessment is designed to help people better understand and appreciate individual differences that potentially affect group dynamics and decision-making. It identifies a group's type and its related problem-solving and conflict management styles, as well as how an individual's personality-type preferences influence their approach and response to conflict, providing them with a framework for dealing with conflict situations more effectively and improving relationships. The second session should include conflict management and group dynamics to help the board improve trust and candid, open communication among its members.

The Tennessee School Boards Association offers board retreat services that include teambuilding retreats for school boards and the director of schools. Tennessee School Board Association facilitators conduct the retreats, which can be structured to meet the needs of the board.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is $2,400 per year [$4,800 for two retreats] to have the Tennessee School Boards Association conduct facilitated teambuilding sessions. Board retreat services are $950 per day, plus expenses. The fiscal impact calculation is as follows:

- Facilitated teambuilding session – $1,900 [$950 per day x 2 days].
- Expenses – $500 [$150 per day per diem x 2 days = $300 + $200 transportation costs].

OBSERVATION 1-C

The board has a cumbersome, outdated standing committee structure that does not lend itself to significantly improving governance performance. Since implementing Policy Governance® in 2003, the board has reverted to an outdated committee structure consisting of eight standing committees designated in Board Policy GP-7 and three *"ad hoc "* committees formed for specific purposes.

The standing and *ad hoc* committees, primarily organized around educational and administrative functions rather than governance functions, represent a "silo approach" to structuring board committees. **Exhibit 1-16** presents the board's committee structure in 2013–2014.

Exhibit 1-16
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Education Committee Structure
2013-2014

Board Committee/ Task Force	Type	Committee Charge	Committee Configuration
Advocacy	Standing Committee	Recommend positions to the board on political issues; advance board positions with other governmental officials and educational agencies; and develop coalitions with other entities that share the board's position.	Three individual board members
Budget and Finance	Standing Committee	Develop and complete the School System's operating budget based on available revenues for each fiscal year beginning on July 1st.	Committee of the whole
Capital Needs	Standing Committee	Analyze the School System's facility utilization and needs, and develop a recommendation to the board based on the School System's long-term facilities master plan.	Three individual board members
Director of School's Evaluation	Standing Committee	Research, develop, and recommend tools and procedures for the director of schools' evaluation.	Committee of the whole
Executive Committee	Standing Committee	Meet as often as necessary to perform duties required; advertise for bids; serve as purchasing agent; examine accounts; submit full report of business transactions; any other business assigned by the board.	Board chairperson and director of schools
Ethics	*ad hoc* Committee	Investigate any credible complaint against an official or employee charging any violation of the Code of Ethics, or may undertake an investigation on its own initiative when it acquires information indicating a possible violation.	Three individual board members
Governance	Standing Committee	Consider policy revisions and perform routine checks on the governance structure for recommendation to the board.	Committee of the whole
Nondiscrimination Procurement Program	Standing Committee	Work in concert with Metropolitan Nashville Government's plan to increase the offering of procurement opportunities for minorities and women.	Two individual board members
Student Assignment Task Force	Standing Committee	Monitor the current student assignment plan. The committee meets bi-annually.	Two individual board members

Exhibit 1-16
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Education Committee Structure
2013-2014 (Cont'd)

Board Committee/ Task Force	Type	Committee Charge	Committee Configuration
Teaching and Learning*	*ad hoc* Committee	Monitor the School System's Performance Framework.	Two individual board members
Naming of Schools	*ad hoc* Committee	Convene to consider criteria and rationale for naming school buildings.	Three individual members of the board.

Source: 2013-2014 Metropolitan Board of Education Committee Listing and Board Policy GP-7.
* On July 8, 2014 the board amended Board Policy GP-7, Committees and Appointments, to include the Teaching and Learning Committee as a standing committee.
Note: Two new members were elected to the board in August 2014 and the board's committee structure could possibly change between June 30, 2014 and the date the final report is released.

Exhibit 1-16 shows that, of the board's 11 standing or *ad hoc* committees, none is charged with strategic and operational planning or stakeholder/community relations. Further, the board recently established the Teaching and Learning Committee which, while charged with monitoring the School System's performance framework, is merely an *ad hoc* committee which is not included as a standing committee in Board Policy GP-7 as of June 30, 2014. Additionally, the Budget and Finance, Governance, and Director's Evaluation committees operate as committees of the whole, while the remaining eight committees have one to three members. This committee configuration often contributes to ineffective communication as board members are dispersed among disparate committees, some of which do not add value to improving governing performance in a Policy Governance® model.

According to the article "Stand and Deliver" by Doug Eadie of the National School Boards Association published in the June 2013 edition of the American School Board Journal, "…the two pre-eminent governing streams in every organization, including school districts, are planning and performance monitoring, which are the "bread and butter" governance functions. A third, narrower stream is important, but not as critical: community and stakeholder relations. This modern committee structure has proved to be highly effective in taking the governing performance of school boards to the next level…"

In a presentation entitled *"Governance Policies & Board Committees: Purpose, Performance and Practices,"* delivered by Tanya J. Giovanni to the North Carolina School Boards Association Policy Conference June 18–19, 2009, current best practices in designing contemporary committee structures for school boards recommend that school board committees follow four key governing functions, as outlined below:

- board operations and coordination;
- strategic and operational planning and budget preparation;
- performance oversight and monitoring; and
- external and community relations.

According to contemporary best practices, school boards can significantly improve their governing performance by reducing, rather than expanding, the number of standing committees, which allows for more board member participation in governance, planning, and performance monitoring functions that provide a foundation for continuous governance improvement. Giovanni's presentation recommends four standing committees aligned with a school board's key governing functions, which include:

- **Governance or Executive Committee** – would be responsible for planning board agendas and coordinating the work of the other standing committees.

- **Planning Committee** – would be responsible for overseeing board involvement in strategic and operational planning and preparation of the annual budget, and for reviewing and recommending key planning actions to the board.

- **Performance Monitoring Committee** – would be responsible for tracking educational and financial performance and for recommending updated operating policies to the board as appropriate.

- **External Affairs Committee** – would be responsible for overseeing the relationship with the public at large and with key people in the community.

RECOMMENDATION 1-C.1

Redesign the board's standing and *ad hoc* committee structure to reflect contemporary best practices for organizing school board committees to improve governing performance.

The chairperson of the board should lead the board in redesigning the board's existing committee structure, using contemporary best practices, to reflect a modern committee structure for school boards, which is essential to improving governing performance. The board should design the committee structure around key governing functions rather than traditional educational and administrative functions. Moreover, the board must consider the statutory requirements in Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-2-206, which outlines the configuration of the executive committee of the board, as well as consolidating the responsibilities of *ad hoc* committees into its standing committee structure.

The board should consider reducing the number of standing committees to five from the eight standing committees included in Board Policy GP-7. Additionally, the *ad hoc* Ethics Committee, authorized in Board Policy GP-10, Section 5 (Ethics Complaints), could be positioned in the Governance Committee and activated when necessary. The board should consider revising Board Policy GP-7 to establish the following standing committee structure:

- Executive Committee;
- Governance Committee;
- Planning & Budgeting Committee;
- Performance Monitoring & Accountability Committee; and
- Community & Stakeholder Relations Committee.

Exhibit 1-17 depicts the proposed standing committee structure to reflect best practices, including existing *ad hoc* and standing committees that will be consolidated into the new structure.

Exhibit 1-17
Proposed Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Education Committee Structure

Proposed Standing Committee	Existing Committee Consolidated into Proposed Standing Committee Structure
Executive Committee	Executive Committee (Required by Law)
Governance Committee	• Governance (Standing) • Ethics *(ad hoc)*
Planning & Budgeting Committee	• Budget and Finance (Standing) • Capital Needs (Standing) • Nondiscrimination Procurement Program (Standing)
Performance Monitoring & Accountability Committee	• Director's Evaluation (Standing) • Student Assignment Task Force (Standing) • Teaching & Learning *(ad hoc)*
Community & Stakeholder Relations Committee	• Advocacy (Standing) • Naming of Schools (*ad hoc*)

Source: McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP Review Team, June 2014.

The responsibilities of each of the existing standing or *ad hoc* committees should be incorporated into the new charge of the proposed standing committee structure.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-D

The board does not have a complete performance dashboard to aid board members in monitoring various initiatives to improve student and operational performance that are linked to "End Results for Students" included in Board Policy E-2 and the School System's five-year strategic plan.

The School System has had a "district dashboard" for a year and the majority of board members were unaware of its existence because the director of Information Management and Decision Support had limited engagement from board members as it was developed. Additionally, the assistant to the director for Program Results Management corroborated this fact, indicating the School System provided the board with a school board dashboard developed in collaboration with board members and the School System's data warehouse team. Moreover, the data warehouse team invited all board members to participate in the requirements sessions to design the components of the dashboard, but a majority of the board members did not participate in the sessions. Accordingly, the school board dashboard is incomplete and contains "too much data." The School System is in the process of refining the data included in the school board dashboard.

Without a complete performance dashboard, the board cannot efficiently view and analyze student achievement, financial and operational performance data necessary to successfully accomplish the essential governance function of performance monitoring. Moreover, without performance dashboards that display metrics and key performance indicators for various initiatives, board members lack the

transparency necessary to ask members of the executive leadership team incisive questions related to actual versus expected performance in board work sessions.

A performance dashboard is a dynamic management tool that is used by an organization to gauge performance and progress toward specific goals. Typically, the dashboard is a one-page management tool updated several times throughout the year and its metrics may cover several functions within the organization, including operations, finance, and instruction. School board members use dashboards for viewing and analyzing student achievement and performance data in addition to operational performance data. A dashboard can provide timely data to board members so they can monitor program and operational performance, identify problems in real time, and make informed policy decisions.

RECOMMENDATION 1-D.1

Complete the design of the board's performance dashboard to provide board members with a tool to monitor the initiatives related to student achievement and administrative, financial, and operational performance.

The chairperson of the board should task the director of schools with assembling key members of the data warehouse team to devote a series of work sessions to working collaboratively with board members to complete the design of the board's performance dashboard to aid them in monitoring the various initiatives currently underway in the School System. Board members should work with the data warehouse team to leverage information stored in the School System's data warehouse to develop key performance indicators and metrics necessary to conduct their performance monitoring activities. Sample metrics are outlined in the Performance Accountability Systems Chapter of this report (Chapter 12). The data warehouse is a centralized repository for pertinent student, financial, and operational system data that can be easily accessed and manipulated for analytical and reporting purposes.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-E

Four of the nine board members expressed concern about the School System's lack of responsiveness to complaints and requests from their constituents.

Although the School System has a process for receiving, tracking, resolving, and communicating the resolution of complaints to stakeholders (which include constituents in board members' respective districts), several complaints have reached board members, which some board members believe is the result of ineffective communication and follow-up with their constituents. Moreover, one board member felt the board did not have a process to ensure that complaints from constituents are resolved timely.

A failure to provide swift resolution to complaints, or a failure to communicate to stakeholders the status of their complaints results in constituents taking their complaints directly to board members, who may or may not know a complaint has been registered with the School System. This potential "process gap" frustrates some board members because, as elected officials, they feel they have an obligation to see to it that the School System responds to and resolves their constituents' complaints in a reasonable period of time, all the while communicating updates of the status of the complaint to constituents until the matter is resolved.

The School System has a commendable Customer Service Center in which Customer Service staff receive unresolved complaints, create an electronic record of each complaint, assign a tracking number to the complaint, forward the complaint to the appropriate authority within the system (such as lead principals and members of the executive leadership team), and continuously track and communicate the status of the complaint to board members' constituents. However, the board wants to fill the vacant position for a "board administrator," who would handle constituent communications to make sure constituent issues brought to board members are resolved or communicated back to them as "unresolved" with a reason why they could not be resolved. Further, one board member suggested revisions to Board Policy EE-3, Treatment of Parents, Students and Citizens, that outlined a process for specifically handling "constituent matters," including target response times for: 1) acknowledging the referring board member(s) receipt of the matter; 2) determining the action steps for addressing the matter, and advising the referring board member(s) on the proposed action steps; and 3) resolving the matter, declaring it unresolvable, and providing a written response to the referring board member(s) explaining the disposition of the matter, including articulating the relevant board or administrative policies factoring into any decision(s). The governance committee referred the suggested revisions to the director of schools to work with the assistant to the director of schools for Communications (who is responsible for the Customer Service Center) to recommend to the board potential revisions to Board Policy EE-3 after considering the board member's suggested revisions and bring a revised policy to the board for adoption. At the time of this writing, the director of schools and the assistant to the director of schools for Communications were drafting revisions to Board Policy EE-3 to submit to the governance committee.

Also, during the review team's on-site interviews, the director of schools was in the process of hiring an individual to specifically handle and manage constituent matters submitted by members of the board. According to the assistant to the director of schools for Program Results Management, this individual's role is specifically responsible for ensuring that school board members' constituent complaints "feed completely through the resolution and response loop, and keep the school board member who submitted the issue well-informed of the progress and/or resolution."

RECOMMENDATION 1-E.1

Modify existing processes within the Customer Service Center to establish a specific tracking, monitoring, and reporting protocol for handling board members' referrals of constituent matters.

The director of schools should collaborate with the assistant to the director of schools for Communications to establish specific tracking, monitoring, and reporting protocols within the School System's Customer Service Center to handle constituent matters referred by board members. The Customer Service Center already has a system for receiving, managing, and tracking stakeholder complaints that it could "fine-tune" to incorporate specific protocols to significantly improve the responsiveness to board members' constituent matters, and resultant communication of the ultimate resolution of the matter back to the referring board member in a reasonable time frame. These protocols should include the following:

- dedicated system "prompts" to identify constituent matters referred to the director of schools by board members;

- prioritized communication tree designating the persons to notify, via electronic email that the Customer Service Center received the matter, and the time and date received. This communication tree should include the referring board member, the director of schools, the name of the executive

leading the department responsible for resolving the matter, and the constituent who brought the matter to the referring board member;

- specific time frames for responding to the referring board member acknowledging receipt of the matter, notifying them of actions taken, and resolving the matter; and

- specific communication intervals to notify persons included in the communication tree of the status of their matter if it is not immediately resolved.

If the Customer Service Center successfully implements these specific tracking, monitoring, and reporting protocols, and they meet the expectations of board members, an additional resource dedicated to board members' constituent matters will not be necessary.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

PLANNING

Planning is essential to effective school system management. Proper planning establishes a mission and identifies goals and objectives, sets priorities, identifies ways to complete the mission, and determines performance measures and benchmarks to achieve goals and objectives. In its purest sense, planning anticipates the effect of decisions, indicates possible financial consequences of alternatives, focuses on educational programs and methods of support, and links student achievement to the cost of education.

Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student (Education 2018) is the School System's comprehensive five-year strategic plan that the director of schools and executive leadership team created in collaboration with the board and the stakeholders. According to the overview of the strategic plan included in the executive summary of the strategic plan the director of schools presented to the board, the stakeholders who provided input for the plan included students, parents, teachers, coaches, principals, staff, and community partners.

The strategic plan originated with the comprehensive reform efforts initiated by the director of schools in May 2009 through Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves, with the Transformational Leadership Groups formed to review best practices, conduct research, and develop reform proposals for the School System. Additionally, the School System was awarded $30,300,000 in Race to the Top funding in March 2010, and initiated a six-step process to apply for a second round of Race to the Top funding in November 2012. Although the School System did not receive a second round of Race to the Top funding, the research, analysis, and collaboration involved with preparing the Race to the Top grant submission for the second round of funding served as the foundation for the strategic plan. **Exhibit 1-18** presents a summary of the six-step process the School System used to prepare the 2012 Race to the Top grant application, which serves as the basis for developing Education 2018.

Exhibit 1-18
Six-Step Process Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Used to Apply for Second Round Race to the Top Grant Funding

Step	Activity/Task
Step 1	Submitted first application for Race to the Top grant funding and consulted with network lead principals to determine what the School System wanted to achieve in its schools.
Step 2	Assembled a research and assessment team to collect "raw data" to obtain a systemwide view of successful and struggling schools based on specific benchmarks.
Step 3	Assembled two teacher focus groups to determine which techniques work in schools and obtain their input and ideas related to student achievement, school management, and central office support.
Step 4	Conducted parent and student focus groups to obtain their input and ideas related to student achievement, parental involvement, School System initiatives.
Step 5	Assembled leaders from all central office departments to obtain their input and ideas related to their respective roles supporting the schools. Also, included input from the Nashville Chamber of Commerce and business community obtained through the Leadership and Learning Department as a result of collaboration on initiatives to prepare high school students for college.
Step 6	Used data and information gathered from focus groups and meetings to develop and submit a Race to the Top grant application in November 2012.

Source: McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LPP Review Team's interview notes, February 2014.

Using the Race to the Top 2012 Grant application process as its foundation, the School System assembled members of the executive leadership team and, based on evidence gathered from reform efforts underway since 2009, the School System reviewed its vision, mission, values, and beliefs, and developed a comprehensive strategic plan with strategies and objectives based on a "Theory of System Change."

Exhibit 1-19 presents the School Systems' vision, mission, and beliefs which are incorporated into the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018.

Exhibit 1-19
Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student, 2013–2018
Vision, Mission & Beliefs

Vision	• Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools will provide every student with the foundation of knowledge, skills, and character necessary to excel in higher education, work, and life. • We embrace and value a diverse student population and community. Different perspectives and background form the cornerstone of our strong public education system.
Mission	• Provide an excellent teacher in every class, for every student, every year. • Ensure that school leadership is focused on high student achievement and cultivates an environment that produces excellence for a diverse student body. • Build and sustain effective and efficient systems to support finances, operations, and the academic and personal growth of students. • Engage all families, recognizing the power and responsibility of parents and caregivers to drive success for students. • Strengthen connections with the entire community to support all areas of student growth.
Beliefs	• All students bring unique cultural backgrounds, learning styles, abilities, interests, and social and health needs. • Each student can achieve at high levels, exceeding national standards. • Quality school staff is essential to academic excellence. • Consistent and sustained leadership ensures results are achieved and proven strategies can take hold. • Professional development must be sustained, clear, and consistently focused on quality instruction. • Families and community organizations must be partners in meeting our goals. • Each person in the School System is responsible for working toward this vision. • Effective, two-way communication with parents and other stakeholders is essential. • Transparency and accountability must be valued and practiced.

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Website, June 2014.

Coupled with the School System's vision, mission, and beliefs, the Theory of System Change is embedded into the concept of personalizing learning experiences for all students (which serves as the "lever of change") "so they can grow, achieve, and be empowered, leading to student success in college, career and life." **Exhibit 1-20** presents the Grow, Achieve, and Empower goals by 2018 that are included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student.

Exhibit 1-20
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Strategic Plan, 2013–2018
Grow, Achieve, and Empower Goals for 2018

Goals Included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student		
GROW Goals	**ACHIEVE Goals**	**EMPOWER Goals**
• 60 percent of students will advance at least one achievement level on annual state assessments. • 59 percent of students will meet, or exceed, their peers statewide in academic growth on annual state assessments. • Student ratings of their sense of belonging and connection to school will increase annually. • Student ratings of their self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making will increase annually.	• 71 percent of students will be proficient or advanced on annual state assessments. • 40 percent of elementary and middle school students will project to score a 21 or higher on the ACT. • 50 percent of high school students will score 21 or higher on the ACT composite (or 990 on the SAT). • 75 percent of high school students will be enrolled in at least one course for college credit, 100 percent of enrolled students will take associated exams, and 75 percent will pass the exam. • 88 percent of high school students will graduate within four years plus one summer. 100 percent will complete a capstone experience.	• The percentage of students rating their school learning experiences positively increases annually. • The percentage of students and families rating their school's program favorably will significantly increase from 2014-2015. • 100 percent of K-12 students will demonstrate leadership skills, as measured by school-level evaluation rubrics. • 100 percent of students will set learning goals and track their own learning progress.

Source: Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student, presented to the Board of Education August 27, 2013 and revised January 2014.

To implement the Theory of System Change, the strategic planning team organized the goals and objectives in the plan around three distinct strategies to achieve specific goals for student performance and system performance. These three strategies include: 1) quality teaching; 2) equity and excellence; and 3) transformational leadership, which outline three specific objectives for each strategy that are linked to the student and system performance goal categories of Grow, Achieve, and Empower.

Exhibit 1-21 presents a summary of the Theory of System Change concept imbedded into the strategic plan.

Exhibit 1-21
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Strategic Plan, 2013–2018
Theory of System Change Concept

Theory of System Change				
EDUCATION	**2018**	**Strategy 1** **Quality Teaching**	**Strategy 2** **Equity & Excellence**	**Strategy 3** **Transformational** **Leadership**
	Objectives			
Lever of Change:	**GROW** Are all students _growing_ academically, socially, and emotionally every year?	**Grow** Objective **G1.1** Transform teaching and learning using personalized approaches that meet the unique strengths, needs, and interests of every learner.	**Grow** Objective **G2.1** Direct resources and supports to the specific needs of learners.	**Grow** Objective **G3.1** Increase principal and teacher autonomy and accountability for leading and managing academic and cultural change.
Personalized Learning **Learning experiences that strengthen relationships, value every learner, raise expectations for learning and customize content and instruction to meet learners' diverse needs, interests, and strengths.**	**ACHIEVE** Are all students _achieving_ high academic standards?	**Achieve** Objective **A1.2** Continuously increase the rigor and relevance of learning content and experiences for every learner.	**Achieve** Objective **A2.2** Expand all students' access to relevant learning content, resources and opportunities, in and out of school time.	**Achieve** Objective **A3.2** Create a culture of continuous improvement focused on high expectations for every learner.
	EMPOWER Are all students _empowered_ by having voice, choice, and ownership in their learning experiences?	**Empower** Objective **E1.3** Empower learners with knowledge and support to create learning goals and frequently monitor progress.	**Empower** Objective **E2.3** Maximize and leverage parent and community partnerships to ensure shared accountability for student outcomes.	**Empower** Objective **E3.3** Expand opportunities for students, parents, and teachers to use their talents, skills and experiences to accelerate school improvement.
Support for Schools: Knowledge Base; Systems & Operations Accountability for Results: School Performance; System Performance **Educational Support System** _"We believe when we **personalize learning,** our students will grow, achieve, and be empowered, leading to student success in college, career, and life."_				

Source: Adapted from Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student, presented to the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board on August 27, 2013.

School System performance goals include school academic performance, equity and diversity, and establishing and sustaining a collaborative culture through an educational support system that demands accountability for results.

The School System used the strategic planning framework to seamlessly link and measure outcomes developed for each instructional and support department to performance goals and objectives, for the three strategies included in the strategic plan. Moreover, the School System uses Education 2018 to annually prioritize the allocation of budget resources to achieve student performance and system performance goals outlined in the plan.

OBSERVATION 1-F

Some board members reported they did not participate in the visioning or stakeholder engagement processes when the director of schools and executive leadership team developed the School System's five-year strategic plan.

Although the majority of board members applauded the strategic plan, with one member saying it was "excellent," some board members reported that the executive leadership team initiated and managed the entire strategic planning process without conducting a visioning session with the board. Four of the nine board members commented that the board was involved in the strategic planning process only to the extent that the director and executive leadership team provided updates to the board throughout the process and asked board members for feedback during board work sessions.

Upon further investigation and discussions with members of the executive leadership team, specifically the assistant to the director for Program Results Management, the visioning process and foundation for the School System's strategic plan has continuously evolved, dating back to 2009 when the director of schools began his tenure. During 2009, the board contracted with the Collaborative Communications Group to engage the school board and other stakeholders within the Nashville community to develop the School System's Vision, Mission and Beliefs statement. The board unanimously approved the Vision, Mission and Beliefs in its August 11, 2009 meeting with an 8-0 vote. Over the next four years, the executive leadership team, using the School System's Vision, Mission and Beliefs as its foundation, obtained formal and informal feedback from board members. They obtained this feedback in meetings, work sessions, and discussions related to the director of schools' evaluation to develop strategic initiatives for the School System's application for Race to the Top grant funding from the U. S. Department of Education.

When new board members took office in August 2012, the director of schools scheduled a retreat for September 13-14, 2012, at which time the board reviewed and discussed the School System's Vision, Mission and Beliefs, as well as the Theory of Action which is an essential part of the foundation for Education 2018. The new board members did not suggest any changes to the Vision, Mission and Beliefs, and the director of schools informed the board of strategic initiatives included in the School System's Race to the Top grant application, which served as the foundation for Education 2018. While there has been no formal visioning session, the director of schools has solicited feedback from the board during the strategic planning process culminating in the board unanimously approving Education 2018 in its September 10, 2013 board meeting.

While there appears to be a disconnect or misinterpretation by some board members of "being engaged in the visioning process" it is important for board members to participate in a visioning session at the beginning of the strategic planning process. This element of the strategic planning process is preferred so that the entire board and director of schools can develop a shared vision that is typically used to chart a long-term course for the School System. The board and director of schools missed an opportunity to become a more cohesive team by foregoing a visioning session at the inception of the strategic planning process. For example, four new members joined the board after the August 2012 school board elections and could have provided fresh perspectives to be considered by the board and director of schools through a "team-oriented" visioning process that typically yields a shared vision.

Four of the current board seats will be up for re-election in August 2014, and the board could experience significant turnover. One board member has already decided not to seek re-election, and three other seats are contested. Additionally, the director of schools is in the final year of his contract, which expires in June 2015. These factors will require the board and director of schools to revisit the strategic plan to be sure the newly configured board continues to share the long-term vision for the School System and collectively "buy-in" to the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018.

RECOMMENDATION 1-F.1

Conduct a strategic planning retreat to re-engage the board in the strategic planning process to review the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student.

The board chairperson should schedule a strategic planning retreat in 2015, after the new board is in place and after the appointment of a new director of schools, to review the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018. This retreat should have as its purpose to "re-engage" the board and the newly appointed director of schools in the strategic planning process given the turnover in two board seats resulting in a newly configured board, and the transition to new leadership in July 2015.

Given the tremendous progress the School System has made with multiple reform initiatives, it is critical that the newly configured board and newly appointed director of schools move forward with a shared vision for the long-term direction of the School System. More significantly, the strategic planning retreat will allow the newly configured board and newly appointed director of schools to revisit the goals, objectives, and strategies included in the current strategic plan because board members and the director of schools were collectively engaged in the process to review the current strategic plan and potentially agree to a shared vision.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources, as the board chairperson would lead the retreat.

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

Dr. Jesse Register has served as the director of schools since January 15, 2009, and is the chief executive officer of the School System. The director of schools' executive leadership team is responsible for day-to-day operations and administration. The executive leadership team functions as the director of schools' cabinet and includes the chief financial officer, chief operating officer, chief academic officer, chief human capital officer, chief support services officer, assistant to the director for Communications, assistant to the

director for Strategic Planning & Management, and the assistant to the director for Program Results Management.

The School System organizes all schools into 12 clusters, representing feeder patterns and school zones which are essential to the assigned students. Each cluster is in a specific geographical area within the system and includes elementary and middle schools that feed into the high school assigned to that particular cluster. **Exhibit 1-22** graphically depicts the organization of the School System's clusters.

Exhibit 1-22
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Cluster, 2013–2014
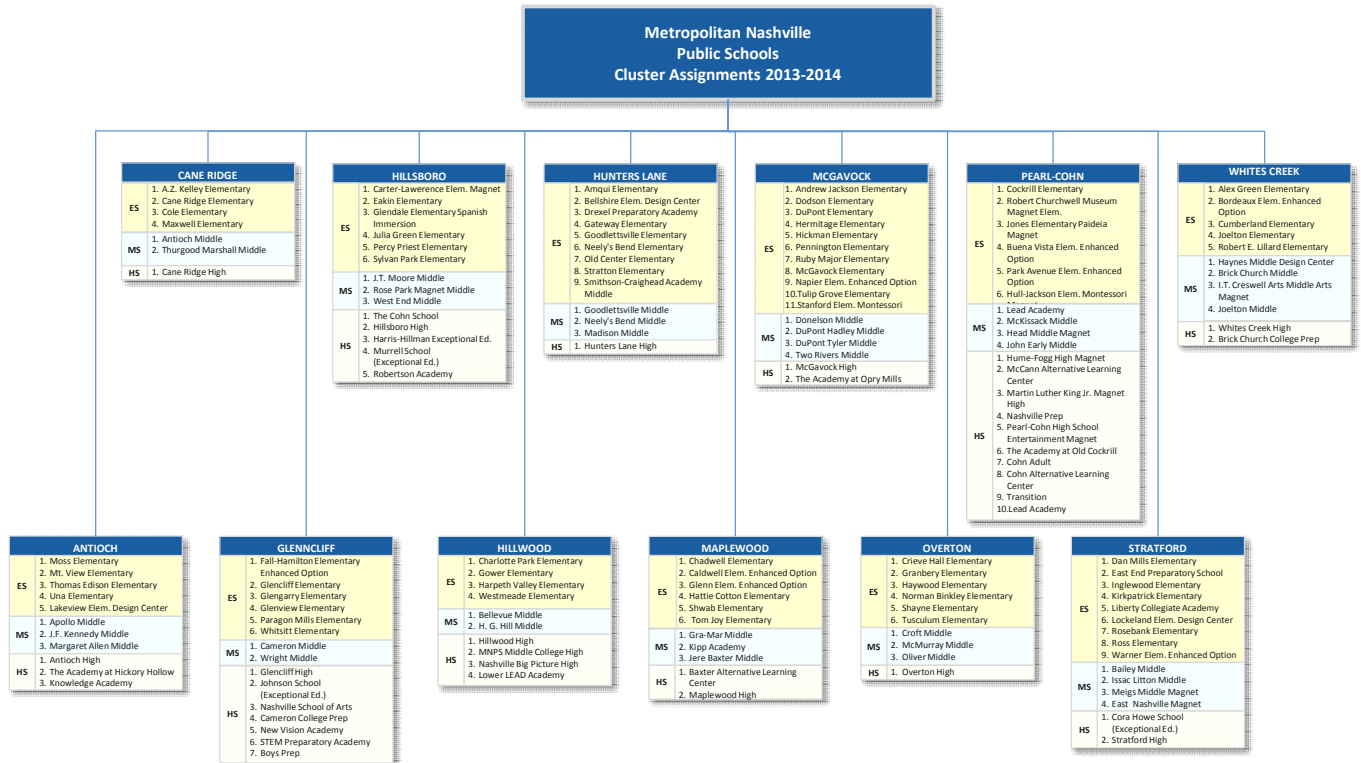
Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Website, June 2014.

The director of schools meets with the executive leadership team each Monday at 8:30 a.m. Members of the executive leadership team notify the director of schools' executive assistant of items they wish to discuss with the team in the Monday meetings that are in addition to items the director of schools has placed on the agenda. The executive assistant prepares the agenda and related supporting information, and distributes a packet for the meeting to each member of the executive leadership team each Friday afternoon.

Executive leadership team meetings typically last three and one-half hours and include extensive discussions of issues and strategies affecting administration and operation of the School System, the issuance of directives by the director of schools, status reports by executive leadership team members, and reviewing potential questions and answers for regular board meetings and work sessions.

The director of schools is a good listener and encourages open, candid dialogue in the executive leadership team meetings. He has a participative management style in which he delegates authority to members of his executive leadership team and holds them accountable for results. Hence, the director of schools supports and coaches members of his executive leadership team, allows them to disagree with him and express their concerns on particular issues, and encourages them to resolve conflicts with each other without his intervention.

OBSERVATION 1-G

Members of the executive leadership team do not consistently communicate key messages, initiatives, and directives to the broader leadership at the central office staff and school levels.

The common theme from interviews with members of the executive leadership team and principals is that communication is not consistent and the schools are often unaware of basic initiatives agreed to by the executive leadership team. For example, the majority of principals in the elementary school principals' focus group were unaware of the School System's pilot program with network lead principals' schools and innovation schools, initiated with 17 schools in 2013-2014, to phase in full autonomy and school-based budgeting for principals in all schools in the system by 2015-2016.

The assistant to the director of Schools for Communications created a weekly key messages list and sent the document to the executive leadership team each Monday afternoon after the executive leadership team meeting. Entitled "Key Messages," the document provided concise information on current and anticipated news topics, public discussions, and new programs that were discussed in executive leadership team meetings. The assistant to the director for Communications reported that many of the members of the executive leadership team shared this information with others in their respective divisions.

Despite efforts to provide a vehicle to communicate key messages from executive leadership team members, some members still cited communicating decisions down through the management and administrative levels of the School System has a significant weakness requiring immediate attention. This communication deficit contributes to confusion among members of the central office staff, school leadership, and teachers because they often learn of decisions made within the executive leadership team meetings through indirect channels, rather than from a coordinated, cohesive communication effort at the executive level of the School System. The indirect communication channels include colleagues in the central office who may know members of the executive leadership team, fellow principals who may have heard about initiatives in conversation with other principals, or in meetings with teachers after a central office department has begun implementation of the initiative or directive.

In an effort to improve the communication of decisions, directives, and key messages from the executive leadership team, the director of schools pledged to initiate more "direct communication" with teachers about specific issues and initiatives approved in the executive leadership team meetings via e-mail. Further, he has directed the assistant to the director of schools for Communications to develop an internal communications plan to improve the communication of key messages, initiatives, and directives originating within the executive leadership team.

The Council of the Great City Schools, in its publication *Building Public Confidence in Urban Schools: It Begins Inside the District, A Guide for Administrators and Board Members [2009-2010]*, says all school district leaders are responsible for communicating with employees. It goes further to say that school district leaders should "build leadership" by recognizing the need for internal communication and consider the following:

- keeping managers, supervisors, and principals informed so that they can disseminate information to their employees and teachers, respectively; and

- conducting scheduled meetings with employees by the director of schools, senior, and middle management.

The publication also suggests developing strategies and tactics to "build bridges" to all segments of the organization, which would significantly improve communications from the executive leadership team to employees throughout the School System.

RECOMMENDATION 1-G.1

Develop specific strategies and tactics to include in the School System's internal communications plan to communicate key messages, initiatives, and directives from the executive leadership team meetings to the employees throughout the system.

The assistant to the director of schools for Communications should develop specific strategies and tactics to include in the internal communications plan she is responsible for developing for the executive leadership team. These strategies and tactics should recognize the importance of clear, concise, coordinated communication of key messages and initiatives promulgated by the executive leadership team. The Council of the Great City Schools recommends the following strategies and tactics that should be included in the plan:

- developing a consistent electronic communications vehicle to keep managers, supervisors, and principals informed, such as a weekly fact sheet detailing initiatives and directives from executive leadership team meetings;

- conducting periodically, scheduled meetings between employees (teachers and staff) and the director of schools and members of the executive leadership team, including principals, middle managers and supervisors within their respective functions;

- developing an employee opinion survey to determine through which communication tools employees desire or prefer to be informed about issues from the executive leadership to enable them to buy into the system;

- refining and improving existing communication vehicles used to disseminate information to employees, including newsletters, e-mails, and telephone messaging;

- creating a "communications toolkit" for principals and managers that include key messages to be shared when describing a major initiative from the executive leadership team, memo templates for use in communicating with staff, principals, and teachers, and talking points for staff meetings; and

- convening a standing internal communications advisory group consisting of executive and network lead principals, school principals, central office management, staff, teachers and the assistant to the director of schools for Communications.

FISCAL IMPACT

This School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-H

Relationship-based "silos" continue to exist among members of the executive leadership team that hinder collaboration between functions, which contributes to tension between team members.

Interviews with members of the executive leadership team revealed the existence of underlying tension between certain members of the executive leadership team that affects the collaborative working relationship between departments in the central office. Limited collaboration between central office departments contributes to disjointed, ineffective support for schools throughout the School System.

While members of executive leadership teams said during interviews that discussions in executive leadership team meetings are candid and free-flowing, most acknowledged the free-flow of information is not consistent and does not allow the team to thoroughly deliberate issues. In fact, some members of the team felt their colleagues were sometimes "guarded" in sharing information. More significantly, members of the executive leadership team all cited the primary driver of conflict was attributed to member's venturing into another members functional area, which is "outside their lane." When this occurs, the director of schools encourages individual members of the executive leadership team to resolve problems among themselves.

The director of schools recognizes the group dynamic within the executive leadership is a work in progress and he hired a consultant specializing in group dynamics to conduct periodic leadership development retreats to improve the leadership and conflict resolution skills of members of the executive leadership team. One of the retreats specifically addressed "silos, turf, and politics," all of which could render collaboration between team members and their respective departments ineffective, potentially weakening the relationship between the schools and the central office.

Survey results corroborate the problems with collaboration in the central office, which appears to emanate from the executive leadership team. **Exhibit 1-23** presents the results of survey questions related to the central administration.

Exhibit 1-23
District Organization and Management Survey Results
Central Administration

Question	Percentage Responses					
A5. Central administration is efficient.	**Number of Survey Respondents**	**Agree or Strongly Agree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Disagree or Strongly Disagree**	**N/A**	**Total**
Survey Group						
Central Administrators	62	48%	34%	16%	2%	100%
Principals/Assistant Principals	104	48%	38%	13%	1%	100%
Support Staff	438	31%	34%	34%	2%	100%
Teachers	1,208	23%	33%	40%	4%	100%

Question	Percentage Responses					
A6. Central administration supports the education process.	**Number of Survey Respondents**	**Agree or Strongly Agree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Disagree or Strongly Disagree**	**N/A**	**Total**
Survey Group						
Central Administrators	62	71%	21%	5%	3%	100%
Principals/Assistant Principals	104	68%	25%	7%	0%	100%
Support Staff	438	42%	33%	22%	3%	100%
Teachers	1,208	30%	34%	31%	5%	101%

Exhibit 1-23
District Organization and Management Survey Results
Central Administration (Cont'd)

Question	Percentage Responses					
A7. The morale of central administration staff is good.	**Number of Survey Respondents**	**Agree or Strongly Agree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Disagree or Strongly Disagree**	**N/A**	**Total**
Survey Group						
Central Administrators	62	52%	19%	27%	2%	100%
Principals/Assistant Principals	104	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Support Staff	438	30%	30%	24%	16%	100%
Teachers	1,208	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP Surveys of Central Administrators, Principal/Assistant Principals, Support Staff, and Teachers, May 2014.

Less than 50 percent of central administrators and principals and assistant principals agree or strongly agree that central administration is efficient, while 31 percent and 23 percent of support staff and teachers, respectively, agree or strongly agree that central administration is efficient. Moreover, while 52 percent of central administrators agree or strongly agree that the morale of central administration staff is good, support staff reports a strikingly different response. Only 30 percent of support staff agree or strongly agree their morale is good. Principals and teachers did not have the survey question about morale.

Principals participating in the focus groups have a strikingly different view of central administration than principals responding to the survey. Most principals agreed they get "conflicting directives from different departments" because central administrators are the victims of silo communication in the central office,

which as the elementary principals put it, "gives us a sense that the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing."

It is important to note that the three evaluation reports on Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves and the Inspirational Schools Partnership report cited slight improvements in communication and collaboration between central office departments and schools; however, both reports concluded collaboration continues to be a challenge within the School System.

RECOMMENDATION 1-H.1

Integrate teambuilding retreats into the cycle of periodic leadership development retreats scheduled for the executive leadership team to enhance relationship-building and collaboration.

The director of schools should add team-building retreats to the cycle of leadership development retreats to address the challenges with collaboration between members that extends to their respective departments. The only way to improve "soft skills" related to building and sustaining productive relationships is to continue to reinforce the concepts of cross-collaboration through open communication among members of the executive leadership team. Individual team members will get to know each other's characteristics in a group setting and will learn how to leverage the unique characteristics of each member of the team to improve their relationship and create a more collaborative environment. The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Effective schools meet the needs of communities they serve. Population diversity, economic, and ethnic backgrounds of the students, special service requirements, and adequacy of facilities, staffing resources, and instructional priorities of the community, all contribute to shaping the unique organization of each school.

School management is at the vanguard of student performance and the success or failure of students is dependent on the extent to which schools can perform their core functions. These core functions include quality curriculum and instruction, management of instructional and support staff resources, effective building management, safety and security, discipline management, parental involvement, and community relations. With sufficient autonomy, ownership, and staffing and budget flexibility, principals can effectively manage their schools to achieve the goals and objectives of school systems.

The School System manages principals through the Office of the Chief Academic Officer, Leadership and Learning Department, with seven executive lead principals who report to the executive officer for elementary schools, and to the chief academic officer who also serves as the executive officer for secondary schools, which includes middle and high schools. The seven executive lead principals oversee a network of 11 lead principals who "mentor" elementary, middle, and high school principals throughout the system. **Exhibit 1-24** graphically depicts this "network of lead principals" as configured for 2013–2014.

Exhibit 1-24
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Lead Principals Network
2013–2014

Metropolitan Nashville Lead Principals Network 2013-2014								
High School Networks (33 Schools)		**Middle School Networks (29 Schools)**			**Elementary School Networks (72 Schools)**			
Executive Lead Principal "A"	Executive Lead Principal "B"	Executive Lead Principal "B"	Executive Lead Principal "C"	Executive Lead Principal "D"	Executive Lead Principal "D"	Executive Lead Principal "E"	Executive Lead Principal "F"	Executive Lead Principal "G"
Steve Ball - East MLK HS/MS NSA Hume-Fogg Hillwood HS Hunters Lane HS Harris Hillman Bill Warren - Old Cockrill Hickory Hollow Opry Mills Cohn School Big Picture Clint Wilson - Glencliff Overton Cane Ridge Stratford Middle College Maplewood	Robbin Wall - McGavock Dupont Tyler MS Two Rivers MS Dupont Hadley MS Donelson MS Antioch HS MNPS Virtual Bass Learning Center Johnson ALC Terry Shrader - Hillsboro JT Moore MS Pearl Cohn Rose Park MS West End MS Whites Creek HS	Apollo McKissack JFK HG Hill	Dorothy Gunn - M. Allen Antioch MS Bellevue Croft Neely's Bend Jud Haynie - Wright Litton Murrell McMurray Meigs Sarah Moore - Goodlettsville IT Creswell Madison Marshall Oliver Joelton Head Haynes Cora Howe	Gra-Mar Bailey John Early Brick Church Cameron Jere Baxter	R. Churchwell Buena Vista Napier	Debra Smith Stratton Bordeaux Hull Jackson Lillard Mildren Nelson Ross Warner Inglewood Rosebank Amqui Bellshire Gateway Goodlettsville Neely's Bend Old Center Shwab Hattie Cotton Glengarry Carter Lawrence Cumberland Joelton Alex Green Maxwell Whitsitt	Kimber Haliburton Park Avenue Cockrill Charlotte Park Sylvan Park Tom Joy Chadwell Glenn Caldwell Eakin Glendale Julia Green Percy Priest Lockeland Dan Mills Gower Westmeade Norman Binkley Haywood Shayne Tusculum Crieve Hall Granbery	Tomas Edison Ladeview Mt. View Una Cane Ridge Cole Dodson Dupont Hermitage Hickman Andew Jackson Ruby Major McGavock Pennington Stanford Montessori Tulip Grove Paragon Mills Glencliff Glenview Fall Hamilton JE Moss
Network Lead Principals (5) **4 High School/1 Specialty School**		**Network Lead Principals (3)**			**Network Lead Principals (3)**			

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Leadership and Learning Department, June 2014.

OBSERVATION 1-I

The format of monthly principals meetings with the executive officers for elementary and secondary schools does not allow for interactive discussion or dialogue.

Secondary principals bemoaned the format of the meeting as one that does not encourage two-way dialogue between the principals and executive officers. Principals commented that, in a typical principals' meeting, they usually listen to the executive officers discuss system initiatives, directives, or updates, with no opportunity to participate in an interactive discussion to share their views. Most perceived the principals meeting format to be symptomatic of central administrators making decisions affecting schools without obtaining input from principals who are on the front lines.

Conducting principals meetings without providing principals an opportunity to thoroughly discuss issues, initiatives, or directives that could potentially affect how they manage their schools does not give them a voice in shaping decisions from central administrators that could impact student achievement or basic building operations. Failure to consistently obtain feedback from principals entrusted to provide instructional leadership, discipline management, and school operations management could erode principals' trust in central administrators and result in missed opportunities to increase and sustain student achievement.

RECOMMENDATION 1-I.1

Revise the format for monthly principals meetings to allocate time to obtain feedback from principals through two-way dialogue with the executive officers for elementary and secondary schools.

The chief academic officer, who also serves as the executive officer for secondary schools, should revise the format of monthly principals meetings to provide opportunities to receive feedback from principals related to various system initiatives, directives, and updates affecting schools. The format of the meetings should be flexible and thoughtfully considered based on input from principals to determine how they would like to provide feedback. The executive officers for elementary and secondary education should solicit this input from principals in a targeted survey.

The format should consider, at a minimum, the following suggested revisions:

- allocating time to conduct a principals' roundtable discussion, with rotating principals as participants, to discuss upcoming initiatives and directives and answer questions;

- allocating a block of time for constructive dialogue at each meeting, with one principal from each level designated to lead discussions related to specific initiatives; and

- devoting "timed segments" to a "principals town hall meeting" in at least one meeting each quarter to have interactive dialogue between principals and the executive officers or selected central administrators presenting initiatives or directives affecting schools.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-J

The current principal evaluation process requires network lead principals to evaluate the principals they are coaching and mentoring in their respective networks, who are their peers.

The principal evaluation process is an integral part of the School System's school accountability and transparency initiative included in the system's long-term strategic plan. However, elementary and high school network lead principals confirmed in focus group sessions that they prefer not to evaluate their peers, and most participants felt "uncomfortable" in the role of evaluating their peers. One network lead principal said: "…I prefer to be there for my peer to provide support as your coach rather than your evaluator…"

Elementary school network lead principals felt their peer-to-peer evaluations tended to score higher than evaluations conducted by executive lead principals who reside in the Leadership and Learning Department in the central office rather than in schools. The executive lead principals agreed with the sentiment of elementary and high school network lead principals, suggesting that network lead principals should not evaluate building principals, as they are peers. Moreover, executive lead principals were resolute in their belief that executive lead principals should prepare the evaluations of building principals with network lead principals providing "formative" information as input for the evaluations.

Experiences of members of the National Federation of Independent Business, like Tom Armour, co-founder of Toronto-based High Return Selection, a company specializing in hiring, performance, and retention for organizations in North America and Europe, show peer-to-peer evaluations tend to sometimes be uncomfortable because employees tend to form relationships in small communities with their peers. When peer-to-peer evaluations force colleagues on the same level to review and evaluate each other's performance, it sometimes compromises objectivity, leading to less than candid evaluations, which do not contribute to the professional development of the employee evaluated.

RECOMMENDATION 1-J.1

Modify the evaluation process for principals to require executive lead principals to conduct annual performance evaluations for building principals with input from network lead principals.

The chief academic officer should work with the chief human capital officer to modify the current peer-to-peer evaluation process, by requiring executive lead principals to conduct performance evaluations for building principals. Requiring executive lead principals to conduct these evaluations would allow network lead principals to focus more on supporting and coaching their peers, rather than the discomfort some currently experience preparing evaluations of their colleagues. Further, modifying the current peer-to-peer evaluation process will enable the building principals to grow professionally and personally from candid evaluations prepared collaboratively with the executive lead principals.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-K

The School System's central office has not effectively communicated the common calendar of meetings and events that principals must attend throughout the month and annually.

Principals cited the absence of "pre-planning" in the central office as the primary factor that causes them to be away from their schools frequently each month. Participants in each focus group characterized the central office as reactive rather than proactive, often sending email communications about mandatory meetings in the central office or at locations away from schools at the last minute.

Upon further investigation of the comments recorded from participants in the principals' focus groups about the absence of central office administrators pre-planning and scheduling meeting at the last minute, there is evidence that the School System has published an internal and external event calendar on its website for a number of years. The Communications Department provided individual central office departments and members of the executive leadership team instructions on how to use the calendar to disseminate to employees throughout the School System. Based on comments from the respective focus groups with elementary, middle, and high school principals, the central office departments and executive leadership team has not effectively communicated the "common calendar" on the website to principals throughout the School System.

Principals are the chief operating officers of their respective schools and must meticulously plan their schedules to maximize the amount of time they spend in their schools attending to instructional, student discipline, human resources, parental involvement, and building operations and management issues. If principals are unaware of the existence of a common calendar on the School System's website they must continuously react at the last minute to unscheduled meetings. Effective communication from the central office on how to access and use the calendar on the School System's website will allow the principals to better plan their schedules, thereby reducing the continued absence from their schools which could very well have a negative impact on student achievement.

The Center for Educational Leadership in the College of Education at the University of Washington developed a *Principal Support Framework* from information gathered from a survey of school districts and charter management organizations, on-site visits, and phone interviews. This framework represents the best thinking of educators and other staff in participating school systems and charter management organizations about the support that is essential to principals if they are to serve as effective instructional leaders in their schools. To make it possible for principals to be effective instructional leaders, the *Principal Support Framework* suggests central office leaders limit requirements for principals to be away from their schools during the school day and during teacher professional development time, suggesting that central office leaders continuously work with principals to help them identify things they can "let go of."

RECOMMENDATION 1-K.1

Communicate to principals how to access and use the common calendar on the School System's website that codifies all meetings and events scheduled by central office departments to facilitate advance planning and schedule management.

The chief academic officer should work with the executive officer for elementary schools and the assistant to the director of schools for Communications to communicate to principals how to access and use the common calendar on the School System's website to help principals plan their schedules and effectively manage their time away from their schools. The Leadership and Learning Department in the central office should take ownership for effectively communicating to principals how to access and use the calendar and work with the assistant to the director of schools for Communications to coordinate meetings the disparate departments in the central office schedule each month and annually. It is important that this communication provide specific guidance on how to use the calendar to review all meetings scheduled in advance to reduce the instances of last minute meetings that disrupt principals' schedules.

Communicating how to access and use the common calendar on the School System's website will enable principals to more effectively manage their schedules to meet the standard included in the Principal

Support Framework, which recommends principals leave their schools no more than one day per month for School System activities that are not related to instructional improvement and student learning.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-L

The School System does not have formal school-based advisory teams at all schools that allow school staff, parents, and community members to be involved in the system's decision-making process.

The director of schools has a Parent Advisory Council that is comprised of two representatives from 120 schools within the School System representing all 12 geographical clusters. Additionally, parent teacher associations and parent teacher organizations select one representative and one alternate to represent their respective school cluster at the Cluster Parent Group. The representatives communicate their schools' concerns and ideas to their Cluster Parent Group and report information obtained at the Cluster Parent Group meeting back to their school.

According to the School System's website, the Parent Advisory Council meets with the director of schools and other system administrators as "a collective body of 240 representatives" every other month to discuss systemwide concerns. In alternate months, Cluster Parent Groups attend individual cluster meetings to discuss cluster concerns and have training and development sessions. In reviewing the School System's website and related supporting documentation, there appears to be no consistent opportunity to obtain school-level feedback from members of the business community other than through community partnerships.

According to the Family and Community Partnerships Departments, in addition to the Parental Advisory Council, high schools have advisory boards consisting of parents, teachers, administrators, and community members; and all Title I schools are required to have active and current School Improvement Planning teams that consist of teachers, parents, and partners. Although Title I schools have this requirement, non-Title I schools often have active Parent Teacher Organizations/Parent Teacher Association organizations that are very involved in decision-making processes at their respective schools. However, these organizations consist primarily of parents and teachers rather than business and community partners. Moreover, school-based leadership and staff have as one of their primary duties to identify and appoint parents to school-based decision teams.

With the School System's long-term strategic plan's emphasis on improving student achievement through quality teaching, equity and excellence, and transformational leadership, as well as the director of schools' desire to provide principals more autonomy at the school level, decision-making must originate at the school level with diverse stakeholders other than just parents, teachers, and administrators. Without input from parents, community members, and business leaders at the school level, principals cannot structure programs and activities to effectively meet the needs of the individual communities they serve.

The state of Texas mandates a school-based decision-making structure that includes school-level decision-making committees. The school principal chairs these committees that include elected classroom teachers, other school-level professional staff, parents, community members, and business leaders representative of the school community's diversity. These committees serve in an advisory role to the principal in much the same way as the director of schools Parent Advisory Council. The school level committees are primarily responsible for assisting principals with developing, reviewing, and revising school improvement plans, including providing input on planning, budgeting, curriculum, school staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization.

RECOMMENDATION 1-L.1

Establish mandatory school-level advisory committees at all schools to allow school staff, parents, and community members representative of the school community to be involved in the system's decision-making process.

The director of schools should consider establishing mandatory school-level advisory committees at all schools as the School System transitions to providing autonomy for all principals by 2015–2016. These advisory committees would be chaired by the principals of the respective schools and include diverse membership from the community surrounding the schools. At a minimum, the committees should include one assistant principal, guidance counseling staff, custodial staff, one teacher elected from each grade level, one parent from each grade level, two members of the community at large, and two members of the business community.

The committee should serve in an advisory role to the principal; providing input and feedback in developing school improvement plans, curriculum concerns, school staffing, staff development, and school management.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-M

The School System has not granted all principals complete authority to make all decisions at their respective schools as it transitions to school autonomy.

The School System is in the initial stages of implementing full school autonomy for all schools throughout the School System, as the director of schools piloted 17 schools in 2013–2014 to begin phasing in school autonomy over three years. The initial pilot includes innovation schools and network lead schools; the system will add 55 middle and high schools in 2014-2015, with the remaining elementary and specialty schools receiving autonomy to make certain decisions by 2015-2016.

The initiative to transition to school autonomy is the result of the School System's collaboration with the Tribal Group through the Inspirational Schools Partnership. The Inspirational Schools Partnership cited the lack of principal autonomy as an impediment to student achievement. Accordingly, the director of schools decided to provide principals in the School System some level of autonomy during the phase-in period. The School System's central office will transform itself into a support services organization that exists to support the schools, and principals will have the following autonomy during the phase-in period:

- selecting and hiring assistant principals;

- selecting their own teachers up until June 16th of every year because of a contractual commitment to hire 75 teachers from Teach for America; and

- budgeting flexibility based on a weighted average student-funding model that will provide flexibility with administrative staffing.

The director of schools has yet to grant principals the autonomy to make decisions regarding specific instructional programs aligned with the system's long-term strategic plan or staff development.

RECOMMENDATION 1-M.1

Expand the types of school-level decisions principals can make during the School System's three-year transition to school autonomy.

During the three-year phase-in period to achieve full school autonomy, the director of schools should work with the executive leadership team to determine the specific types of additional authority to give principals for school-level decisions to assist them with managing their schools. At a minimum, the principals should have the authority to implement specific instructional programs at their schools as long as the programs are aligned with the School System's strategic plan. Further, the principals should also have the authority to provide staff development for their teachers and staff that may be unique to the instructional programs and operations of their respective schools.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-N

The School System has not sufficiently trained school principals to assume the authority they need to manage their schools effectively while adhering to systemwide policies and procedures.

As the School System transitions to school autonomy, principals will be required to make school-level decisions regarding budgeting, staffing, human resources management, instructional programming, and staff development. The central office made these types of decisions in the past, which limited the principals' flexibility to modify the decisions to address the unique characteristics and demographic profiles of their respective schools.

Principals who are untrained to administer functions previously managed from central office will have less time to focus on improving student achievement, as they will have steep learning curves related to non-instructional functions. The School System conducts a Principals' Leadership Institute twice each year—one in winter and another in summer—where this training could occur.

RECOMMENDATION 1-N.1

Use the Principals Leadership Institute to train principals to manage their schools once they achieve autonomy from the central office.

Leadership and Learning should work with Human Capital to design specific, targeted training for principals assuming more authority and responsibility in the School System's transition to school-level decision-making because of school autonomy. This training should, at a minimum, include the following areas:

- school funding formulas and budgeting;
- staffing allocations;
- due process, grievances, and evaluations;
- safety and crisis planning;
- school operations management; and
- time management and delegation.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-O

The School System frequently does not allocate assistant principal positions according to its staffing formulas or recommended staffing standards for assistant principals included in *AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools*, thereby resulting in a lost opportunity to periodically evaluate the need for assistant principal positions at specific schools throughout the system.

The School System has detailed school staffing formulas for certificated and school support positions for 2013–2014. These formulas serve as an initial starting point to allocate full-time equivalent positions for certificated and school support administrative personnel based on enrollment in each elementary, middle, and high school. Members of the director of schools' executive leadership team acknowledge the School System intentionally does not always follow its documented staffing formulas because of its unique student demographics, which require the chief academic officer, chief human capital officer, and chief financial officer to take into consideration the individual needs of schools when allocating assistant principal positions. Accordingly, these three members of the executive leadership team collaboratively consider variables unique to each school, including, but not limited to:

- academic performance;
- number of special education students;
- number of students participating in the free and reduced-lunch program;
- location of the school; and
- at-risk student population.

The School System's process for making staffing decisions allows the chief academic officer, chief human capital officer, and chief financial officer to introduce an element of subjectivity to make exceptions to allocating assistant principals to individual schools in accordance with the 2013–2014 School Staffing Formulas.

AdvancED publishes an *Educational Practices Reference Guide*, copyrighted in 2013, which describes educational practices it has found, through its experience base, to assist in providing a quality learning environment. According to AdvancED, "the *Educational Practices Reference Guide* is designed to serve as a resource to school leaders seeking a reference point or example of practices that are aligned with the *AdvancED Accreditation Standards for Quality Schools*." AdvancED cautions: "the reference guide should not be interpreted as requirements, nor should it limit thinking about common practice. The practices serve as reference points of what is generally accepted as good practice, and the practices provide schools with a starting point for comparison. They do not represent the end point, nor should they limit creative and innovative practices that best meet the needs of students." Accordingly, the reference guide includes recommended staffing levels for certificated administrative personnel, including principals, assistant principals, counselors, and library media specialists.

Exhibit 1-25 presents a comparison of the School System's school staffing formulas for 2013–2014 for assistant principals to AdvancED's recommended staffing levels for assistant principals, by type of school.

Exhibit 1-25
Comparison of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Staffing
Formula for Assistant Principals in 2013–2014 to AdvancED, Standards for Assistant Principals

Type of School	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formula	Staffing Levels Recommended by AdvancED	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Formula vs. AdvancED Standards
Elementary	• 1 – 499 Students – No Assistant Principal. • Each Additional 500 Students – 1.0 Assistant Principal.	• 1 – 499 Students – No Assistant Principal. • Every Additional 250 Students – 0.5 Assistant Principal.	AdvancED standards allow an additional 0.5 assistant principal up to 250 students, but for each additional 500 students the standards are identical to Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' formula.
Middle School	• 1 – 499 Students – No Assistant Principal. • Each Additional 500 Students – 1.0 Assistant Principal.	• 1 – 249 Students – No Assistant Principal. • Every Additional 250 Students – 0.5 Assistant Principal.	AdvancED standards allow an additional 0.5 assistant principal *more* than Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' formula up to an additional 250 students, but for each additional 500 students the standards are identical.
High School	• 1 – 499 Students – No Assistant Principal. • Each Additional 500 Students – 1.0 Assistant Principal.	• 1 – 249 Students – No Assistant Principal. • Every Additional 250 Students – 0.5 Assistant Principal.	AdvancED standards allow an additional 0.5 assistant principal *more* than Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' formula up to an additional 250 students, but for each additional 500 students the standards are identical.

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formulas for 2013–2014; AdvancED Educational Practices Reference Guide, Copyright 2013, Page 14.

While the School System's staffing formula and the AdvancED standards do not introduce subjective factors into developing recommended staffing levels for assistant principals, they can be used as a reference point to evaluate the reasonableness of final allocations of assistant principals to individual schools after applying needs-based, subjective criteria. For example, **Exhibit 1-25** shows that the school staffing formulas for assistant principals is less generous than the staffing levels for assistant principals in elementary, middle' and high schools recommended by AdvancED, as AdvancED's recommended staffing for assistant principals is 0.5 full-time equivalents higher at each level, before considering subjective, needs-based variables.

Exhibit 1-26 compares the School System's actual assistant principal staffing levels in elementary schools to AdvancED staffing standards and to the School System's school staffing formula 2013–2014.

Exhibit 1-26
Comparison of Actual Assistant Principals Staffing Levels for Elementary Schools to
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Staffing Formula for 2013–2014 to AdvancED Staffing Standards

Elementary School	Enrollment	Actual Assistant Principals	AdvancED Standard	Difference Over (Under) AdvancED Standard	MNPS Staffing Formula for 2013 - 2014	Difference Over (Under) MNPS Staffing Formula
Am`qui	640	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Binkley, Norman	468	1.0	-	1.0	-	1.0
Cane Ridge	908	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Chadwell	340	1.0	-	1.0	-	1.0
Churchwell, Robt	539	3.0	0.5	2.5	1.0	2.0
Cole	815	1.0	1.0	-	1.0	-
Dodson	545	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Eakin	575	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Edison, Thos A	692	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
EO Buena Vista	355	1.0	-	1.0	-	1.0
EO Cockrill	500	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
EO Kirkpatrick	382	1.0	-	1.0	-	1.0
EO Napier	460	2.0	-	2.0	-	2.0
EO Park Ave	519	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Glencliff	528	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Glennview	837	1.0	1.0	-	1.0	-
Gower	667	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Granberry	726	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Green, Julia	580	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Harpeth Valley	774	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Haywood	882	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Hickman	553	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Jackson, Andrew	536	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Joy, Tom	552	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Kelley, A Z	723	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Lakeview	931	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Major, Ruby	649	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Maxwell	583	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-

Exhibit 1-26 (Cont'd)
Comparison of Actual Assistant Principals Staffing Levels for Elementary Schools to
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Staffing Formula for 2013–2014 to AdvancED Staffing Standards

Elementary School	Enrollment	Actual Assistant Principals	AdvancED Standard	Difference Over (Under) AdvancED Standard	MNPS Staffing Formula for 2013 - 2014	Difference Over (Under) MNPS Staffing Formula
Mills, Dan	559	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Moss, JE	912	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Mt View	673	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Paideia - Jones	374	1.0	-	1.0	-	1.0
Paragon Mills	909	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Percy Priest	556	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Shayne, May Werthan	782	1.0	1.0	-	1.0	-
Stratton	669	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Tulip Grove	556	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Tusculum	642	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Una	899	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Whitsitt	546	1.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	-
Bellshire Design Center	528	-	0.5	(0.5)	1.0	(1.0)
Bordeaux EOS	372	-	-	-	-	-
Caldwell EOS	280	-	-	-	-	-
Carter-Lawrence Magnet	390	-	-	-	-	-
Charlotte Park	498	-	-	-	-	-
Hattie Cotton	450	-	-	-	-	-
Crieve Hall	403	-	-	-	-	-
Cumberland	405	-	-	-	-	-
DuPont Elementary	461	-	-	-	-	-
Fall-Hamilton EOS	316	-	-	-	-	-
Gateway	242	-	-	-	-	-
Glendale	423	-	-	-	-	-
Glengarry	474	-	-	-	-	-
Glenn EOS	179	-	-	-	-	-
Goodlettsville Elementary	441	-	-	-	-	-
Alex Green	377	-	-	-	-	-
Hermitage	298	-	-	-	-	-
Hull-Jackson Montessori	477	-	-	-	-	-
Inglewood	310	-	-	-	-	-
Joelton Elem.	306	-	-	-	-	-
Lillard Design Center	342	-	-	-	-	-
Lockeland Design Center	294	-	-	-	-	-
McGavock Elementary	313	-	-	-	-	-
Neely's Bend Elem	457	-	-	-	-	-
Old Center	367	-	-	-	-	-
Pennington	368	-	-	-	-	-
Rosebank	298	-	-	-	-	-
Ross	238	-	-	-	-	-
Shwab	372	-	-	-	-	-

Exhibit 1-26 (Cont'd)
Comparison of Actual Assistant Principals Staffing Levels for Elementary Schools to
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Staffing Formula for 2013–2014 to AdvancED Staffing Standards

Elementary School	Enrollment	Actual Assistant Principals	AdvancED Standard	Difference Over (Under) AdvancED Standard	MNPS Staffing Formula for 2013 - 2014	Difference Over (Under) MNPS Staffing Formula
Stanford Montessori	420	-	-	-	-	-
Sylvan Park Paideia	474	-	-	-	-	-
Warner EOS	343	-	-	-	-	-
Westmeade	504	-	0.5	(0.5)	1.0	(1.0)
Total	**37,756**	**50.0**	**23.0**	**27.0**	**36.0**	**14.0**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Data Upload for Current Staffing of Central Office – 2013-2014;
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Data Upload for Charter School Detail Analysis provided to MGT of America with
2013-2014 Enrollment by School.

The detailed analysis in **Exhibit 1-26** shows that the School System has 27.0 more assistant principals than recommended by the AdvancED standards and 14.0 more assistant principals than recommended in its own School Staffing Formulas for 2013–2014. According to the School System's staffing formula for assistant principals in elementary schools, there should be a staff of 36.0 assistant principals in elementary schools based on the enrollment of each elementary school, as compared to a staff of 23.0 assistant principals recommended by AdvancED.

Exhibit 1-27 compares the School System's actual assistant principal staffing levels in middle schools to AdvancED staffing standards and to the School System's school staffing formula for 2013–2014.

Exhibit 1-27
Comparison of Actual Assistant Principals Staffing Levels for Middle Schools to
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Staffing Formula for 2013–2014
to AdvancED Staffing Standards

Middle School	Enrollment	Actual Assistant Principals	AdvancED Standard	Difference Over (Under) AdvancED Standard	MNPS Staffing Formula for 2013 - 2014	Difference Over (Under) MNPS Staffing Formula
Allen, Margaret	475	2.0	0.5	1.5	0.0	2.0
Antioch	696	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Apollo	813	2.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Bailey	443	2.0	0.5	1.5	0.0	2.0
Bellevue	732	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Cameron	571	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Croft, Margaret Elise	739	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Donelson	674	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0

Exhibit 1-27
Comparison of Actual Assistant Principals Staffing Levels for Middle Schools to
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Staffing Formula for 2013–2014
to AdvancED Staffing Standards (Cont'd)

Middle School	Enrollment	Actual Assistant Principals	AdvancED Standard	Difference Over (Under) AdvancED Standard	MNPS Staffing Formula for 2013 - 2014	Difference Over (Under) MNPS Staffing Formula
DuPont Hadley	637	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
DuPont Tyler	660	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Goodlettsville	538	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Gra Mar	435	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Haynes	210	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Hill, HG	625	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Joelton	277	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Kennedy, JF	842	2.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Litton, Isaac	339	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Madison	752	2.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Magnet - Crestwell Arts	459	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Magnet - Head Middle	598	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Magnet - Meigs	693	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Marshall, Thurgood	812	2.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
McKissack	381	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
McMurray	732	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Moore, JT	646	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Museum - Early, John	518	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Neely's Bend	547	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Oliver, Wm Henry	790	2.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Rose Park	407	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Two Rivers	596	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
West End	472	1.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.0
Wright	857	2.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Jere Baxter	438	0.0	0.5	-0.5	0.0	0.0
Brick Church	349	0.0	0.5	-0.5	0.0	0.0
East Nashville	486	0.0	0.5	-0.5	0.0	0.0
MLK	340	0.0	0.5	-0.5	0.0	0.0
Total	20,579	44.0	31.5	12.5	22.0	22.0

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Data Upload for Current Staffing of Central Office – 2013-2014; Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Data Upload for Charter School Detail Analysis provided to MGT of America with 2013-2014 Enrollment by School.

The detailed analysis in **Exhibit 1-27** shows that the School System has 12.5 more assistant principals than recommended by the AdvancED standards, and 22.0 more assistant principals than recommended by its own School Staffing Formulas for 2013–2014. According to the School System's staffing formula for assistant principals in middle schools, there should be a staff of 22.0 assistant principals in middle schools based on the enrollment of each middle school. The analysis confirms that the School System's staffing formula for assistant principal positions in its middle schools, before applying subjective, needs-based variables, yields lower staffing levels for assistant principals in middle schools than those recommended by AdvancED standards, which totals 31.5 positions.

Exhibit 1-28 compares the School System's actual assistant principal staffing levels in high schools to AdvancED staffing standards and to the School System's School staffing formula for 2013–2014.

Exhibit 1-28
Comparison of Actual Assistant Principals Staffing Levels for High Schools to
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Staffing Formula for 2013–2014
to AdvancED Staffing Standards

High School	Enrollment	Actual Assistant Principals	AdvancED Standard	Difference Over (Under) AdvancED Standard	MNPS Staffing Formula for 2013 - 2014	Difference Over (Under) MNPS Staffing Formula
Academy Old Cockrill	94	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Antioch	1,977	6.0	3.5	2.5	3.0	3.0
Big Picture	171	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0
Cane Ridge	1,668	5.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	2.0
Glencliff	1,418	5.0	2.5	2.5	2.0	3.0
Hillsboro	1,210	4.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Hillwood	1,210	4.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Hunters Lane	1,616	5.0	3.0	2.0	3.0	2.0
Magnet - East Nashville	1,196	3.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0
Magnet - Hume Fogg	924	2.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.0
Magnet - King, ML	1,195	2.0	2.0	0.0	2.0	0.0
Magnet Nashville School of Arts	641	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Maplewood	973	3.0	1.5	1.5	1.0	2.0
McGavock	2,300	6.0	4.5	1.5	4.0	2.0
Overton	1,798	4.0	3.5	0.5	3.0	1.0
Pearl Cohn	861	3.0	1.5	1.5	1.0	2.0
Stratford	725	3.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0
Whites Creek	831	3.0	1.5	1.5	1.0	2.0
Total	**20,808**	**61.0**	**36.0**	**25.0**	**32.0**	**29.0**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Data Upload for Current Staffing of Central Office – 2013-2014;
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Data Upload for Charter School Detail Analysis provided to MGT of America with
2013-2014 Enrollment by School.

The detailed analysis **in Exhibit 1-28** shows that the School System has 25.0 more assistant principals than recommended by the AdvancED standards, and 29.0 more assistant principals than recommended its own School Staffing Formulas for 2013–2014. According to the School System's staffing formula for assistant principals in high schools, there should be a staff of 32.0 assistant principals in high schools based on the enrollment of each high school. Again, the analysis confirms that the School System's staffing formula for assistant principal positions in its high schools, before applying subjective, needs-based variables, yields lower staffing levels for assistant principals in high schools than those recommended by AdvancED standards, which totals 36.0 positions.

While the School System is attempting to address the unique needs of its student population as it continues its reform initiatives, it is equally important to note that it is prudent to use its own staffing formula and AdvancED standards to periodically evaluate existing staffing allocations for assistant principals. A periodic evaluation of the practical application of staffing formulas for assistant principals will allow the School System to look for opportunities to reduce administrative costs as public school budgets tighten.

RECOMMENDATION 1-O.1

Evaluate the School System's assistant principal staffing formula for inclusion of other relevant factors that may influence the assignment of assistant principals along with consideration of AdvancED recommended standards. Then, review assistant principal positions for optimal staffing levels.

Despite current school administrative staffing levels often determined using subjective needs-based criteria to support school reform initiatives and instructional programs linked to goals and objectives included in Education 2018,the School System has an opportunity to review and evaluate the number of assistant principal positions based on its existing allocation model. Conducted annually or bi-annually, this review and evaluation could enable the executive leadership team to potentially reduce the number of assistant principal positions to more appropriately reflect its own staffing formula and AdvancED standards. While the School System has a number of programs geared toward the individual needs of its unique student population, the executive leadership team should strive to strike a balance between using subjective, needs-based criteria; following its own staffing formula; or following staffing levels recommended by AdvancED based on AdvancED's broad experience with K–12 public schools and private schools.

Although AdvancED's recommended staffing levels for assistant principals are by no means prescriptive; they clearly serve as a benchmark for comparison to determine minimum administrative staffing levels sufficient to meet the needs of students and ensure effective school operations. More importantly, the School System's school staffing formulas for 2013–2014 provide guidelines for allocating assistant principals to schools, which are equally useful in establishing a benchmark for comparison as members of the executive leadership team periodically review and evaluate the number of assistant principal positions necessary to meet the needs of its students. Thus, the School System should take the opportunity to review and evaluate its allocation model and potentially eliminate assistant principal positions in elementary, middle, and high schools to strike a balance between its staffing formula and AdvancED's recommended staffing levels.

Exhibit 1-29 presents the fiscal impact of eliminating assistant principal positions.

Exhibit 1-29
Fiscal Impact of Eliminating Assistant Principal Positions

Type of School	Number of Assistant Principal Positions to Further Evaluate	Assistant Principal Salary from Administrative Salary Schedule [Masters, Step 4]	Total Estimated Annual Savings
AdvancED Recommended Staffing Standards for Assistant Principals			
Elementary Schools	27	$70,534	$1,904,418
Middle Schools	12.5	$71,828	$897,850
High Schools	25	$74,416	$1,860,400
Total			**$4,662,668**
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formula for Assistant Principals			
Elementary Schools	14	$70,534	$987,476
Middle Schools	22	$71,828	$1,580,216
High Schools	29	$74,416	$2,158,064
Total			**$4,725,756**

Source: Human Capital Division, Assistant Principal Salaries from Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Administrative Salary Schedule, 2013-2014 School Year.

Evaluating the School System's staffing formula could possibly result in a range of potential annual savings from eliminating assistant principals' positions based on AdvancED standards or the School System's Staffing Formulas for 2013–2014. The evaluation could possibly conclude that no adjustments to the School System's staffing formula are necessary, which results in "zero" savings; or annual savings from the evaluation could be as much as $4,725,756, based on the analysis included in the recommendation above. Accordingly, potential annual savings realized from evaluating the School System's staffing formula ranges from a low of $0 to a high of $4,725,756.

OBSERVATION 1-P

The School System follows its school staffing guidelines for librarians and library clerks; does not follow the guidelines for guidance counselors, guidance clerks, or guidance technicians; and does not have staffing guidelines for psychologists and therapists.

Guidelines for staffing instructional-related support positions differ. They range from a simple enumeration by state departments or boards of education of the positions that school systems have the responsibility for establishing guidelines to more specific staff-to-student ratios offered by many professional associations and accrediting agencies. For example, Tennessee's Rules of State Board of Education [Chapter 0520-1-03-.07 (2)(a) and (b), and 0520-01-03-.08 (1)] provide staffing levels for a limited number of positions including library information specialists but state that local boards "shall develop standards and policies for attendance services, guidance services, school psychological services, school social work services, and school health services."

Virginia's Education Code [Code of Virginia, Title 22.1-253, Education, Chapter 13.2, Standard 2] stipulates specific staff-to-student ratios for librarians, guidance counselors, technology support and resource personnel, and school-based clerical personnel. For other positions, including social workers, school nurses, and school psychologists, it simply requires local boards to "provide those support services that are necessary for the efficient and cost-effective operation and maintenance of its public schools." The

Standards for School Libraries recommends staffing based on five categories of student enrollment each of which includes three levels of staffing—minimum, average, and exemplary.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's guidelines contain three enrollment categories each with a minimum and exemplary staffing level. Maryland's recommended staff assignments are based on four enrollments levels for elementary libraries and six for secondary libraries.

Added guidance related to staffing is provided by some state boards of education. In Tennessee, for example, the state board provides a listing of Basic Education Program components that serve as the basis for calculating the level of funding for each school system in Tennessee [BEP Blue Book at www.tn.gov/.../BEP_Blue_Book_FY13-14].

The guidelines of school systems are generally more specific in terms of how and at what level schools qualify for staff. The Miami-Dade and Polk County School Districts in Florida have lengthy regulations outlining how staffing allocations are determined by level, program, and fund, and, as do the Austin and Fort Worth Independent School Districts in Texas, use staff-to-student ratios to allocate assistant principals, media specialists, counselors, and clerical staff.

Generally, any differences among districts (regardless of size) in how staff allocations are determined are related to enrollment or some other student measure such as average daily membership. For example, while all four districts above allocate a principal position regardless of a school's enrollment, the manner in which they allocate counselors differs. In Miami-Dade, an elementary school does not receive a second counselor until enrollment exceeds 900 students. In Polk County, there is no increase to the allocation of one counselor per elementary school regardless of enrollment. The maximum full-time equivalent allocation for counselors in the Austin Independent School District is 1.5, which does not occur until a school's enrollment reaches 1,000 students. Fort Worth Independent School District, on the other hand, allocates a second counselor when enrollment reaches 801. The same kind of differences exists for all instructional support positions.

Professional organizations as well as organizations that provide management and staffing studies or that serve as accrediting agencies also offer guidelines for allocating staff. AdvancED suggests student-to-staff ratios for a school's administrative head, assistant administrator, counselor, and library media specialist. The Council on Accreditation and School Improvement recommends standards for a school's administrative head; administrative or supervisory assistants; guidance professionals; library or media specialists; and support staff for administration, library media, or technology [Accreditation Standards 2005, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/ Council on Accreditation and School Improvement, page 7].

The National Association of School Psychologists suggests that student-to-staff ratios for psychological services generally should not exceed 1,000 students per school psychologist. If the psychologists are providing more comprehensive services such as evaluations, consultation, individual/group counseling, crisis response, behavioral intervention – the ratio should not exceed 500 to 700 students for each psychologist [Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services, National Association of School Psychologists, 2010, Page 10].

Determining appropriate staffing levels for other positions is more difficult. As an example, many districts do not have specific guidelines for therapists, and those that do vary widely. In November 2010, the District Management Council conducted a study for the Lexington (Massachusetts) Public Schools entitled *Student Services & Financial Assessment.* Data on special education services gathered in the study from nearly 900 schools across 45 states found that it was not uncommon to see a 200 percent variation in speech and

language staffing and a 1,000 percent variation in occupational therapy staffing. It also found that caseloads for related services staff often vary by 30-40 percent, both within a district and between like districts. In the same study, responses to a survey of more than 200 therapists nationwide indicated that caseloads vary by 30 percent within a given district, contact hours with children vary by 50 percent from therapist to therapist, and average group sizes vary by 250 percent even when serving similar students.

The School System classifies staff positions as either school-attributed or non-school attributed. Although either can be funded through the general operating budget or one of the various grants administered by the System, this analysis considered only positions funded through the general operating budget. School-attributed positions are those serving one or more schools to which any full-time equivalent values are assigned for accounting purposes.

Included among the school-attributed positions are librarians, counselors, psychologists, therapists, instructional coaches, educational assistants/paraprofessionals, and secretaries/clerks. The positions assigned to each school are determined by staffing guidelines for librarians, guidance counselors, library clerks, and office support staff at all levels; guidance techs at the middle school level only; guidance clerks at the middle and high school levels; and guidance registrars at the high school level only.

The system does not include psychologists, therapists, instructional coaches, or educational assistants and paraprofessionals in its staffing guidelines. Instructional coaches were not included in this analysis as most of those positions are grant-funded. Educational assistants/paraprofessionals and office support staff were not included because of the difficulty in gathering comparable data for comparison.

Exhibit 1-30 shows the School System's staffing formulas allocate one librarian per elementary, middle, and high school with up to 1,499 students and two librarians in schools with 1,500 or more students. Based on 2013–2014 enrollments, the number of formula-provided school-based librarians is 130.0. The actual number assigned to schools was 129.0.

Exhibit 1-30
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formula for Librarians

School Size	MNPS Staffing Formula	Number of Libraries	Number of Librarians Per Formula	Actual Number of Librarians
Elementary				
1 to 1,499 Students	1	73	73	73
1,500 or More Students	2	0	-	-
Elementary Total		73	73	73
1. Middle School				
1 to 1,499 Students	1	36	36	36
1,500 or More Students	2	0	-	-
Middle School Total		36	36	36
2. High School				
1 to 1,499 Students	1	12	13	12
1,500 or More Students	2	4	8	8
High School Total		16	21	20
Grand Total		125	130	129

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Learning Technology and Library Services, February 2014. School Staffing Formulas for 2013-2014.

Exhibit 1-31 shows the funding for librarian positions provided through the Basic Education Program components generates 128.5 elementary and secondary librarian positions, 103.5 for schools with any combination of grades K-8, and 25.0 positions for schools with grades 9-12**.**

Exhibit 1-31
Basic Education Program Funding Components for Librarians
Tennessee State Board of Education

School Size	BEP Funding Level Formula	Number of Campuses	Number of Library Information Specialists Per Formula	Actual Number of Library Information Specialists
Any Combination of Grades K-8				
1 to 264 Students	0.5	11	5.5	11.0
265 to 439 Students	1.0	36	36.0	36.0
440 to 659 Students	1.0	38	38.0	38.0
660 or More Students	1.0	24	24.0	24.0
K-8 Total		109	103.5	109.0
3. High School				
1 to 299 Students	0.5	0	0	0
300 to 999 Students	1.0	7	7	7.0
1,000 to 1,499 Students	2.0	5	10	6.0
1,500 to 2,249	2.0	4	8	8.0
2,250 Students or More	3.0	0	0	0
High School Total		16	25	21.0
Grand Total		125	128.5	130.0

Source: 2013-2014 BEP Blue Book, Tennessee basic Education Program BEP 2.0, State Board of Education.

Exhibit 1-32 shows the allocated library clerks according to the System's staffing guidelines results in 84.5 positions. The actual number of clerks allocated is 81.0, 34.0 at the elementary level, 29.5 at the middle school level, and 17.5 at the high school level. There is no provision in the Basic Education Program components for library clerks.

Exhibit 1-32
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formula for Library Clerks

School Size	MNPS Staffing Formula	Number of Campuses	Number of Library Clerks Per Formula	Actual Number of Library Clerks
Elementary				
1 to 449 Students	0.0	22	0.0	5.5
450 to 599 Students	0.5	35	17.5	13.0
600 or More Students	1.0	16	16.0	15.5
Elementary Total		73	33.5	34.0
4. Middle School				
1 to 399 Students	0.5	8	4.0	3.0
400 to 999 Students	1.0	28	28.0	26.5
1,000 or More Students	1.5	0	-	-
Middle School Total		36	32.0	29.5

Exhibit 1-32
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formula for Library Clerks (Cont'd)

School Size	MNPS Staffing Formula	Number of Campuses	Number of Library Clerks Per Formula	Actual Number of Library Clerks
High School				
1 to 1,499 Students	1.0	12	12.0	10.5
1,500 to 1,999 Students	2.0	3	6.0	5.0
2,000 or More Students	1.0	1	1.0	2.0
High School Total	-	16	19.0	17.5
Grand Total	-	125	84.5	81.0

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Learning Technology and Library Services, February 2014. School Staffing Formulas for 2013-2014.

The School System employs 44.0 full-time equivalent social workers but has no staffing guidelines for this position. Lee County, a similar-size district in Florida with an average daily membership of 83,486, employs 32.0 equivalent social workers, or a 1:2,609 social worker to students ratio. This compares with the ratio of social workers to students in the School System of 1:1,770 (44 social workers to 77,870 students in average daily membership). The State of Tennessee Basic Education Program funding level components for social workers is 1 per 2,000 students in total average daily membership, or 39.0 full-time equivalent social workers.

Exhibit 1-33 shows the System's staffing guidelines for guidance counselors provide for 211.5 positions, 79.5 at the elementary level, 64.0 at the middle school level, and 68.0 at the high school level. The actual number of guidance counselors is 212.0; 83.5, 57.0, and 71.5 at the elementary, middle, and high school levels respectively, which indicates that while the total number of positions closely approximates that provided by the staffing guidelines, the System is not following its guidelines with respect to the staffing of counselors at the elementary, middle school, or high school levels.

Exhibit 1-33

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formula for Guidance Counselors

School Size	MNPS Staffing Formula	Number of Campuses	Number of Guidance Counselors Per Formula	Actual Number of Guidance Counselors
Elementary				
1 to 299 Students	0.5	7	3.5	-
300 to 699 Students	1.0	54	54.0	-
700 to 799 Students	1.5	4	6.0	-
800+ Students	2.0	8	16.0	--
Total Elementary	-	73	79.5	83.5
5. Middle School				
1 to 500 Students	1	14	14.0	--
501 to 750 Students	2	16	32.0	-
751 to 1,250 Students	3	6	18.0	
Total Middle	-	36	64.0	57.0
6. High School				
1 to 699 Students	2	1	2.0	-
700 to 1,399 Students	3	9	27.0	-
1,400 to 1,799 Students	4	4	16.0	-
1,800 to 1,999 Students	5	1	5.0	-
2,000 to 2,999 Students	6	1	6.0	-
2,400+ Students	7	0	-	-
Grade 9 at Zoned Highs	1	12	12.0	-
Total High	-	28	68.0	71.5
Grand Total	-		211.5	212.0

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Director's Annual Membership/Attendance Report, 2012-2013, School Staffing Formulas for 2013-2014, April 2014.

The Basic Education Program components for guidance counselors is 1.0 per 500 students in average daily membership in grades K-6, and 1.0 per 350 students in average daily membership in grades 7-12. According to the Director's Annual Membership/Attendance Report for 2011–2012, dated January 29, 2014 ("Director's Annual Membership/Attendance Report"), based on an average daily membership of 46,037 in grades K-6 and 31,833 in grades 7-12, those guidelines generate 183.0 positions: 92.0 at grades K-6 and 91.0 at grades 7-12.

Exhibit 1-34 shows the System's staffing formulas for guidance clerks and technicians generate a total of 26.0 guidance clerks and 3.0 guidance technicians at the middle school level, and 21.0 guidance clerks at the high school level. The formulas make no allowance for guidance clerks or technicians at the elementary level. Information provided by the School System indicates that 69.5 guidance clerks/support positions were eliminated after the beginning of the 2013–2014 school year, resulting in fewer guidance clerk and technician positions than provided by the staffing formulas.

Exhibit 1-34

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Staffing Formula for Guidance Clerks and Technicians

School Size	MNPS Staffing Formula	Number of Schools	Number of Guidance Clerks Per Formula	Number of Guidance Technicians Per Formula
Guidance Clerks				
Middle Schools				
1 to 599 Students	0.5	20	10.0	0
600 or More Students	1.0	16	16.0	0
Total	-	36	26.0	0
High Schools				
1 to 1,599 Students	1.0	11	11.0	0
1,600 or More Students	2.0	5	10.0	0
Total	-	16	21.0	0
Guidance Technicians				
Middle School				
1 to 749 Students	0.0	33	-	0.0
750 or More Students	1.0	3	3.0	3.0
Total	-	36	3.0	3.0

Source: School Staffing Formulas for 2013-2014.
No staffing formula for guidance clerks or technicians for elementary schools.

The System currently employs 51.0 psychologists but has no staffing guidelines for the position. Using a student-to-staff ratio of 1,000 to 1 as suggested by the National Association of School Psychologists, the School System would have 82.6 psychologists. The Basic Education Program funding level components for psychologists is 1 per 2,500 of total average daily membership. Based on the System's average daily membership of 77,870, the BEP allows for 31.0 positions.

The System does not have staffing guidelines for therapists, nor does Tennessee include that position in its Basic Education Program components. The wide range of therapy services available in school districts makes comparisons difficult. Baltimore County Public Schools, for example, lists seven available related services described as "therapy" or staffed by a "therapist"—assistive technology, audiology, occupational, physical, speech-language, music, and art.

The Maryland State Department of Education issues an annual statistical handbook that provides the number of full-time equivalent personnel in several different groupings, one of which combines therapists with teachers. Two districts, Anne Arundel Public Schools and Baltimore City Public Schools, are similar in size to the School System. The student-to-teacher/therapist ratio in Anne Arundel is 14.4 to 1 (i.e., Anne Arundel enrolls 76,303 students and employs 5,314 teachers/therapists) and is 14.9 to 1 in Baltimore City (Baltimore City enrolls 84,212 students and employs 5,659 teachers/therapists), both smaller than the 16.3 to 1 in the School System. Using the average student to teacher/therapist ratio for Anne Arundel and Baltimore of 14.63 and assuming that the number of teachers and therapists would both be affected by lowering the ratio, the System's allocation of therapists would be 31.0, an increase over the current allocation of 25.5.

The School System's staffing guidelines do not accurately reflect how and on what basis positions are allocated. System staff has indicated that multiple factors influence not only the number of requested positions but to which locations they are assigned.

RECOMMENDATION 1-P.1

Develop a comprehensive set of staffing guidelines for all support staff positions assigned to campuses that more accurately reflect not only student enrollments, but also other relevant factors that influence the assignment of support staff.

The School System should develop and document comprehensive staffing guidelines for all support staff positions, including psychologists and therapists that reflect needs-based criteria in addition to student enrollment. For example, these needs-based criteria should include such relevant factors as students with disabilities, students of color, and students from low income families, who are at a greater risk for mental health challenges, but are less likely to receive the appropriate services [Vera, Buhin & Shin, 2006].

Comprehensive, well-documented staffing guidelines for all support staff positions will enable the School System to consistently apply its staff allocation methodology based on student enrollment and needs-based variables.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

COMMUNICATIONS

The School System's Communications Department is responsible for providing a clear and concise framework for communicating with internal and external stakeholders (parents and community members, taxpayers, business, civic, and political leaders). It is important that the School System engage in effective "two-way" communication, which means providing transparent information that results in a better understanding of objectives, accomplishments, and the needs of the organization. Equally as important, the School System's Communications Department is responsible for listening to the needs of stakeholders and ensuring that an effective feedback process is in place so that information needs are met.

The School System is diverse, serving students from more than 80 countries speaking more than 70 different languages. African American students comprise 45 percent of the system's population, with Caucasians and Hispanics making up the next largest groups with 32 percent and 19 percent, respectively. Nearly 73 percent of the School System's children are economically disadvantaged.

Led by the assistant to the director of schools for Communications, the department is staffed with 19 professionals (including the assistant to the director of schools). **Exhibit 1-36** presents the School System's Communications Department organizational structure.

**Exhibit 1-36
Communications Department Organizational Chart**
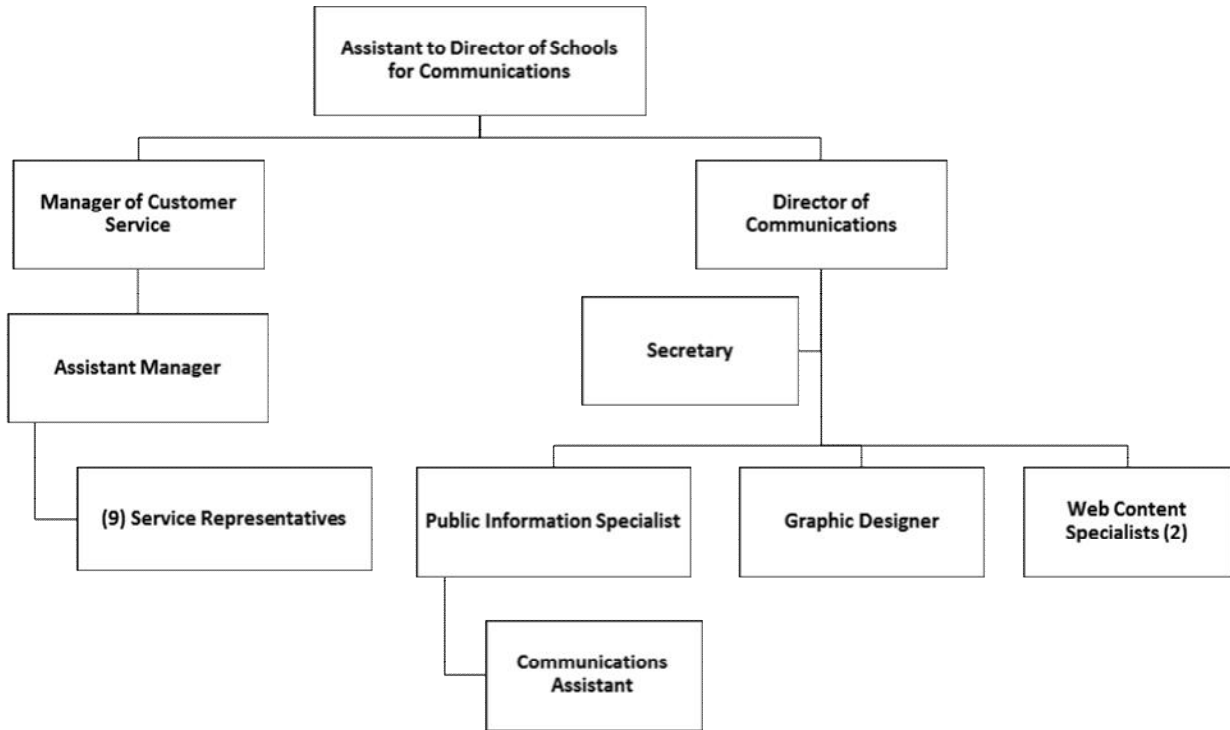
Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, January 2014.

Exhibit 1-37 presents a summary overview of the organizational units and associated responsibilities for the School System's Communication's Department.

Exhibit 1-37
Organizational Units Responsible for Performing Communications Department Functions

Organizational Unit	Major Functions
Assistant to the Director of Schools for Communications	• Provides systemwide strategic direction and high quality service for communication initiatives. • Advances the School System's priorities to improve student performance, support effective human capital practices. • Ensures communications are clear and timely.
Director of Communications	• Serves as School System spokesperson to local and national media. • Assists schools and departments with communication questions and needs. • Prepares content for publications and website. • Point of content for open records requests.
Senior Secretary for Communications	• Prepares correspondence, updates school directory/school list each for print, and distributes publications to schools and the community. • Prepares certificates for school board recognitions, teacher of the year and retirees. Prepares folder for Proposal Review Committee reviews and responds by letter or email with decision.
Communications Specialist	• Issues press releases and media advisories. • Spokesperson and handles local and national media inquiries. • Provides content for School System publications, including Children First!, Report Home, the Annual Report, and various other publications. • Manages Facebook/Twitter and runs live-blog events on Children's First!
Communications Assistant	• Writes and distributes employee communication pieces. • Attends events and meetings and takes photographs as requested. • Distributes press releases and media advisories. • Serves as back up payroll assistant. • Assists with media inquiries and special events. • Assists with ParentLink phone system account management.
Web Content Manager (2)	• Maintains content and create new content on School System website and the employee website. • Designs and develops websites/webpages within the School System site and employee portal. • Trains School System employees to use the Content Management System. • Devises content standards and navigation guidelines for school websites. • Implements content plan for school websites, including hands-on reorganization and site building. • Evaluates and grades school website and website team performance. • Manages Facebook/Twitter.
Multi-Media Design Specialist	• Designs printed materials for public distribution, such as logos, posters, flyers, brochures and booklets. • Assists in designing graphics for web production and visual presentations. • Coordinates design and print production of various central office projects by communicating with department managers and vendors.

Exhibit 1-37

Organizational Units Responsible for Performing Communications Department Functions (Cont'd)

Organizational Unit	Major Functions
Special Projects Manager	• Assists with planning/management of special events, including the First Choice Festival. • Develops content for special projects. • Provides Customer Care training to School System staff.
Customer Service Manager	• Leads the School System Customer Service Center. • Serves as Crisis Response Team Leader. • Troubleshoots and manages call center technologies. • Assists customers with concerns and addresses them in a timely fashion. • Collects and reports Customer Service Center statistics.
Customer Service Center Representatives	• Answers public inquiries about the School System and individual schools. • Works with central office visitors to answer questions/logs calls/inquiries.

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Communications Department.

OBSERVATION 1-Q

The School System lacks a comprehensive communications plan; therefore, key strategic initiatives such as the Education 2018 are not effectively communicated to internal and external stakeholders.

Exhibit 1-38 summarizes the content of the School System's Strategic Communications Plan for 2010-2013.

Exhibit 1-38
Communications Department
Communications Plan Summary

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2010-2013

SITUATION

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools provide pre-K-12 education to 79,000+ students in a diverse, urban community with a staff of 10,000. At present, the schools offer outstanding educational opportunities, but they are not uniformly available. The district's goal is to provide all students with an outstanding education. Taxpayer appetite for increasing resources to the school system is low, so current resources must be allocated to maximize their yield. The community recognizes the importance and value of making the public schools excellent; the Mayor and school board are supportive. MNPS's goal is to become the first choice for families.

MNPS is addressing its priorities with teams of administrators, teachers, community members and parents providing guidance and leadership. The priorities for these teams, called Transformation Leadership Groups or TLG's, are:

Performance Drivers:
- Improving the performance of students with special needs;
- Improving the performance of economically disadvantaged students;
- Improving the performance of EL/LEP students;
- Reforming middle schools; and
- Reforming high schools.

Process Drivers:
- Developing human capital;
- Improving communications;
- Leveraging informational technology/data management; and
- Transforming the district's central office.

Key Messages:
Our vision, ingredients for success and beliefs continue to apply.
- We will provide every student with the foundation of knowledge, skills and character necessary to excel in higher education, work and life. Metro Nashville Public Schools will be the first choice for families.
- We are working to accelerate student achievement and know our success is rooted in having great teachers and school administrators.
- Every person in Metro Schools is responsible for contributing to student achievement.
- District leaders and administrators are servants who support teachers and principals in our schools.

Action Items:
1. Develop weekly key messages to share with district leadership, Customer Service, Hank Clay.
WHO:	*Communications Team*
WHEN:	*Begun February, 25, 2013 and continuing*
STATUS:	*Ongoing*
2. The Director of Schools will visit student one morning each week. Communications staff will arrange to attend, make notes and email photos back to office for quick dissemination through Social Media.

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Communications Department, February 2014.

During interviews with members of the executive leadership team and focus group sessions with elementary, middle, and high school principals, one of the most pervasive comments was the lack of communication throughout the School System.

Multiple members of the executive leadership team commented that the School System does not do a good job communicating its successes either internally or externally, including communicating the strategic plan to internal and external stakeholders.

Although survey results from central administrators and principals suggest internal and external communication is good, verbatim comments from interviews and focus groups suggest otherwise. In fact, one member of the executive leadership team commented that members of the executive leadership team should share responsibility for communicating Education 2018 to internal and external stakeholders. **Exhibit 1-39** presents the relevant results of surveys of central administrators, principals and assistant principals, support staff, and teachers.

Exhibit 1-39
District Organization and Management Survey Results
Internal and External Communication

Question	Percentage Responses					
A9. Internal communication regarding central administrative initiatives is good.	*Number of Survey Respondents*	**Agree or Strongly Agree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Disagree or Strongly Disagree**	**N/A**	**Total**
Survey Group						
Central Administrators	62	47%	31%	21%	2%	100%
Principals/Assistant Principals	104	58%	22%	19%	1%	100%
Support Staff	438	29%	30%	35%	6%	100%
Teachers	1,208	25%	32%	35%	8%	100%
Question	**Percentage Responses**					
A10. External communication regarding central administrative initiatives is good.	*Number of Survey Respondents*	**Agree or Strongly Agree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Disagree or Strongly Disagree**	**N/A**	**Total**
Survey Group						
Central Administrators	62	48%	32%	16%	3%	100%
Principals/Assistant Principals	104	54%	31%	14%	2%	100%
Support Staff	438	29%	37%	29%	6%	100%
Teachers	1,208	25%	35%	33%	7%	100%

Source: McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP Surveys of Central Administrators, Principal/Assistant Principals, Support Staff, and Teachers, May 2014.

Exhibit 1-39 also shows that only 47 percent of central administrators agree or strongly agree that internal communication of central administrative initiatives is good, and 48 percent agree or strongly agree that external communication regarding central administrative initiatives is good. The remaining percentages of central administrators are either not as certain internal and external communication is good, or disagree or strongly disagree that internal and external communication is good. Further, 58 percent of principals and assistant principals agree or strongly agree that internal communication is good, while 54 percent of principals and assistant principals agree or strongly agree that external communications is good.

The principals and assistant principals' responses sharply contrast with responses from support staff and teachers, who give internal and external communication low ratings. When asked whether internal and

external communications regarding central administrative initiatives is good, neither group's response exceeded 30 percent in the agree or strongly agree category.

The survey responses appear to validate some degree of ineffective communication of central administrative initiatives, which includes the strategic plan. Ineffective communication of the School System's long term strategic plan to internal and external stakeholders could cause confusion about School System priorities included in the plan and potentially diminish internal and external support to execute the strategies in the plan.

RECOMMENDATION 1-Q.1

Develop a comprehensive plan to effectively communicate the School System's five year strategic plan and other key initiatives to internal and external stakeholders.

The director of schools should work with the assistant to the director of schools for Communications to develop a detailed, comprehensive communications plan to communicate the features and benefits of the School System's five-year strategic plan. The communications plan should include the following elements for internal and external stakeholders included in **Exhibit 1-40**.

Exhibit 1-40
Elements of Communications Plan for Communicating
Education 2018 to Internal and External Stakeholders

Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
• Develop and communicate the shared vision in the strategic plan between the board and director of schools. • Schedule periodic meetings and visits to schools and departments by members of the executive leadership team to communicate the elements of the plan and priorities necessary to achieve goals in the plan. • Include a strategy for communicating the benefits of the strategic plan to students, teachers, support staff, principals, and other administrators. • Include a strategy for communicating successes and achievement gains because of initiatives in the plan to teachers, students, staff, and administrators. • Include a strategy for the Leadership and Learning Department to take the lead in communicating the elements of the strategic plan to school administrators and teachers.	• Engage the school board in communicating the vision for the strategic plan to the community. • Schedule meetings to "meet the community in the community" and convey the need for the strategic plan and the vision. • Include a strategy communicating the electronic access to information related to the strategic plan, including the School System's website. • Include a strategy for communicating successes and achievement gains because of initiatives in the plan to parents, business leaders, civic groups, and churches. • Include media strategies and strategies for connecting with the external stakeholder community at the grass roots level.

Source: Adapted from "Communicating about School Reform," a webinar series prepared by the Center on Innovation & Improvement, 3/26/2010.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

RECOMMENDATION 1-Q.2

Select a wide cross-section of parent, community members and business/civic partners and administer focus groups and surveys to them annually to obtain feedback regarding systemwide communications initiatives.

The Communications Department should conduct a series of focus groups for community members to identify those channels/vehicles (e.g., interactive meetings, social media, electronic and print media) that have the greatest impact on improved communication. Potential focus group participants should be carefully screened to ensure that stakeholders from all segments of the community are involved.

Once the focus group data is collected, measurable goals and related strategies for improving systemwide internal and external communications should be refined and prioritized.

RECOMMENDATION 1-Q.3

Evaluate the Communications Plan on an annual basis.

The Communications Department should also evaluate the content, appeal, target audience (including the need for bilingual translation), frequency of distribution, and cost-effectiveness of all tools currently used by system and those that need to be explored. The Communications Department should then develop strategies to improve communication and raise awareness of community members.

The evaluation process should determine which programs are reaching the greatest number of people and the type of information being disseminated. In addition, the School System should report evaluation results and continuously refine and redevelop communications and community relations initiatives in order to realize improvements.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement these recommendations with existing resources.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement is essential to the success of a school system and the quality of life and development of its workforce. A successful community involvement program is designed so that it addresses both the unique characteristics of the school system and the community. A critical component of school improvement and accountability systems is a high level of community involvement. Community members and volunteers provide valuable resources that can enrich and enhance the overall educational system. In turn, community members directly benefit because they ultimately supply an informed citizenry, an educated workforce, and future community leaders.

The Family and Community Partnerships Department is responsible for the School System's community involvement functions. The department is staffed with 13 employees including an Executive Director of Family and Community Partnerships. **Exhibit 1-41** presents the current organization of the department.

Exhibit 1-41
Family and Community Partnership Department Organizational Chart
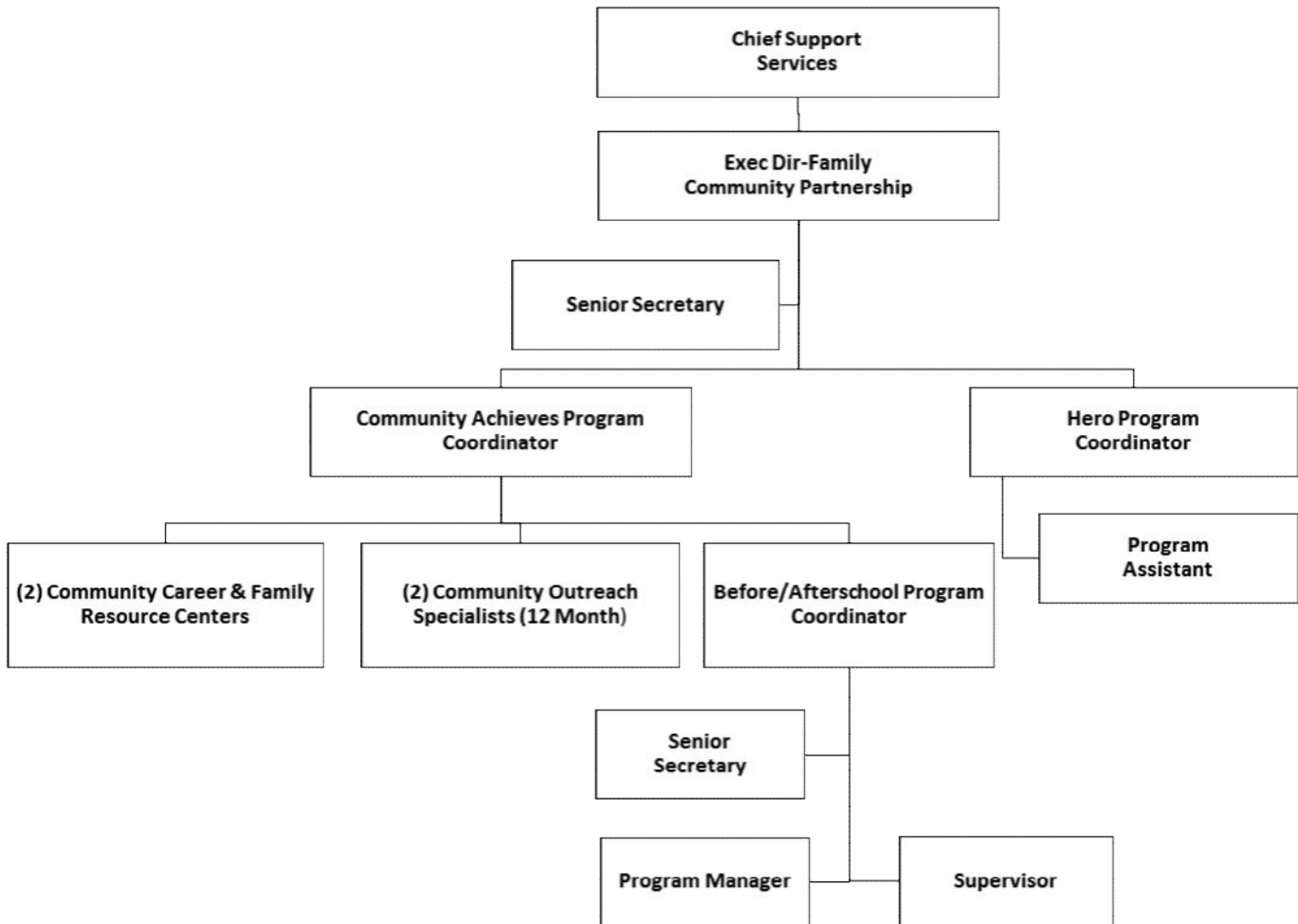
Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, January 2014.

Exhibit 1-42 below presents a summary overview of the organizational units and associated responsibilities for the School System's Family and Community Partnerships Department.

Exhibit 1-42
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Organizational Units Responsible for Performing
Major Family and Community Partnership Functions

Organizational Unit	Major Functions
Executive Director Family and Community Partnerships	• Directs School System partnerships with families, community organizations, governmental entities, foundations, and universities in support of student, family, and community success. • Oversees staff development and training, and support the work of Family Involvement Specialists and Community Outreach Specialists across the School System. • Directs all After School programs.
Senior Secretary	• Keeps the department head/principal informed about activities occurring within the department which could directly affect the operation. Provides direct administrative support for the department head/principal. Schedules and arranges meetings for the department head/principal. • Interprets policies, rules and regulations as needed. • Prepares directives and correspondence for the administrator's signature. Handles confidential information.
Community Achieves Program Coordinator	• Coordinates the development and implementation of the Community Achieves strategic plan that reflects the alignment of services and programs in five key areas: Extended Learning, Parent and Family Engagement, Health and Wellness, Social Services and Adult Learning. • Establishes and promotes community partner engagement within the School System, such as community-based organizations, governmental entities, foundations, universities, families, and school in support of student, family, and community success. • Aligns student support services based on the academic and socio-emotional needs of students, families and schools. Work in conjunction with school staff to increase the capacity of each school to provide opportunities that promote the positive development of youth and families, and the improved academic performance of students.
Hero Program Coordinator	• Provides annual training on the educational rights of homeless students. • Assists with the enrollment of students in transition. • Provides federal law and School System policy as it pertains to homeless students.
Program Assistant	• Performs tasks and procedures relating to the School System's programs and activities at Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools community centers. Recruits and manages partners provide services and trainings to the families. • Handles the logics and coordination of programs developed at each site. Schedules programs and events and assists with the planning, logistics and implementation of various School System activities at the community centers. • Monitors programming by collecting and organizing site data. Prepares accurate and timely reports about partnerships and service delivery.

Exhibit 1-42
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Organizational Units Responsible for Performing
Major Family and Community Partnership Functions (Cont'd)

Organizational Unit	Major Functions
Community Career and Family Resource Centers	• Arranges community gatherings and helping clients who need counseling. • Administers food banks, helping people obtain certain benefits and services, such as welfare, and aiding community members in accessing medical care.
Community Outreach Specialist	• Provides information and referral, counseling, short-term case work and case management services; case management responsibilities may include home visits to women with newborns; providing transportation and accompanying clients to medical and other community services when needed; maintaining up-to-date health assessments and progress notes on clients. • Speaks and transcribes language to non-English speaking clients. Works closely with public health nurses and the medical community to provide comprehensive healthcare. • Maintains contact with professionals of various health and human service agencies to determine client eligibility for services; assesses the case needs of each client; assists families in crisis or emergency; intervenes to insure safety of clients in abusive situations.
Before/Afterschool Program Coordinator	• Coordinates development, implementation and evaluation of the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools before and after-school programs. • Provides accurate and timely local, state, and federal reports in compliance with grant reporting requirements. • Collaborates with school principals for the provision of services, including program design, hiring personnel, and use of facilities. • Designs Before and After School staff training and professional development. Develops procedures and policies for operation of the afterschool program. Develops and manages the program budgets. • Establishes and nurtures partnerships and engagement in Before and After School programs with community-based organizations, governmental entities, foundations, universities, families, and school sites in support of student success.
Senior Secretary	• Reviews and distributes mail, composes correspondence, and compiles documents. Assists with the development, management and reconciliation of the office's budget. Handles all equipment and supplies requests. • Collects, arranges and maintains confidential files. Maintains confidentiality of concerns from employees, parents, and community. • Makes initial review of complaints and inquiries and resolves issues that fall under delegated authority.
Program Manager	• Works with the executive director to plan and implement programs. Measures programmatic progress and evaluate its impact. • Assists in the maintenance of current partnerships with family and communities to support experiential learning programs. • Assists executive director with marketing and resource development to enhance program capacity and effectiveness.
Supervisor	• Supervises department's administrative staff and supervises the administrative functions for a large department. • Manages staff schedules and monitors office operations. Responsible for hiring and managing department's administrative staff.

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Family and Community Partnership Department.

OBSERVATION 1-R

As noted in Accomplishment 1-J, the Family and Community Partnerships Department has implemented a host of academic and social support programs targeted to help students and families overcome impediments to both educational and personal success; while the department has assessed its programs through process evaluation, its evaluation system does not include cost-effectiveness measures to determine whether program outcomes justify the costs.

The Family and Community Partnerships Department seeks to remove barriers to learning for all students, as well as support the staff at individual schools as they focus on improving instruction and increasing student achievement. The department utilizes an integrated focus on parent engagement, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. By using this holistic approach to services, the department strives to meet the needs of student and families based on educational research that shows the following:

- student learning improves;

- parent and family participation in their children's education increase;.

- principals and teachers have more time for quality instruction because the school's community partners help address non-academic barriers to learning; and

- families have more opportunities and support to care for and help educate their children, in addition to more opportunities to contribute to their community.

During the 2012-2013 School Year, the Family and Community Partnerships Department had the following goals, which included:

- increase needs-based school-level partnerships and collaboration;

- provide families with educational opportunities that support student achievement and success;

- create and provide professional development for educators that will result in meaningful engagement of families; and

- increase our capacity for parent engagement in the School System.

Exhibit 1-43 summarizes the process that the department uses to evaluate the largest of its programs on a regular basis in order to continually assess the effectiveness and to modify and adjust them throughout the year to increase efficiency and impact. Summative data on the following programs is collected to facilitate the evaluation process as shown below:

Exhibit 1-43
Family and Community Partnerships Department
2012-2013 Evaluation Process Summary

Program	Evaluation Type/Information Gathered
Community Achieves	A program evaluator monitors outcome-driven results closely. Students are tracked in cohort groups by interventions and programs.
Parent University	Attendance and evaluations of all workshops and events are compiled bi-annually.
Poverty Simulations and Staff Professional Development	Attendance and evaluations of all workshops and events are compiled bi-annually.
Bringing Justice to You	Numbers of parents served and quantity of court costs waived for parents are compiled quarterly.
Before and After School Programs	Students enrolled in programs are placed in cohort groups and their attendance, discipline and academic achievement are monitored, and compared with the larger student population at the school as well as the School System.
HERO (Homeless Education and Resource Office)	Number of students enrolled in program, services rendered, and students are monitored through the Support and Intervention process at each school.
Family Resource Centers	Family Resource Centers monitor numbers of families served, types of services offered, and types of requests and referrals brought to them.

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Family and Community Partnerships Department, February 2014.

The department uses the following methods to measure the success of its programs, which include the following:

- a scorecard has been designed to gauge the effectiveness of the four goals that are set each year;

- annual evaluations are reviewed (and maintained for multiple years) from parents who have attended Parent University sessions, as well as numbers of parents enrolled, and schools served;

- annual evaluations are reviewed (and maintained for multiple years) from professional development that has been offered to staff, as well as numbers of staff trained, and schools served; and

- cohort groups of students have been established to measure the impact of parents who attend Family Academic Success Team meetings. Initial findings reveal a strong correlation between student success and parent participation in the Family Academic Success Team meetings over the course of the year.

In addition, the department has partners that render many types of services at schools and who operate on a contractual basis with the School System. Partner organizations' evaluation processes and results are not always formally shared with the School System in a systematic manner; however, these results are discussed and considered in the overall evaluation process.

Exhibit 1-44 below provides an overview of the Family and Community Partnerships Department progress towards each of its four goals from August 2012 through May 2013 and shows that Goals 1 and 2 were completed and progress was made toward Goals 3 and 4.

Exhibit 1-44
Family and Community Partnerships Department
2012-2013 Internal Year-End Scorecard Report

Goal 1 – Complete	Accomplishments
To increase needs-based school-level partnerships and collaboration	• During the first semester of the 2012-2013 school year, 300+ community partners were secured to participate in one-time school or cluster functions by members of the Department. • Over 270 ongoing community partnerships were established by members of the team.
Goal 2 – Complete	**Accomplishments**
To promote and provide educational opportunities to families that support student achievement	• The department coordinated more than 60 uniquely titled workshops for parents by securing presenters from over 40 outside organizations. More than 2,000 parents participated in these workshops. • Members of the team also facilitated over 70 separately titled parent trainings serving over 5,500 additional parents. • Through ongoing partnerships with local radio programming, a number of informational sessions on topics ranging from parent engagement tips to school safety, and community programs were provided. • Partnerships with local radio also enabled an estimated 60,000 listeners to be reached. • The partnership with the faith-based community enabled the distribution of monthly newsletters to parents on a variety of different topics. School Notes was distributed to an estimated 70,600 parents at over 150 different churches throughout Nashville.
Goal 3	**Accomplishments**
To create and provide professional development for educators and technical assistance to schools that will result in meaningful engagement of families	• The department offered professional development trainings to over 1,600 Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools faculty and staff members during the 2012-2013 school year.
Goal 4	**Accomplishments**
To increase capacity for parent engagement in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	• Department team members worked with parents and school personnel to promote the value of Parent Connection. • Systemwide, there was a 14 percent increase in the number of active Parent Connection Accounts from September 2012 to May of 2013. • In addition to efforts to increase parent capacity through parent access and utilization to Parent Connection, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools parents were encouraged to participate in parent leadership at the school and system level. • The department also assisted with the development of 11 parent support groups within the School System.

Source: Department of Family and Community Partnerships, January 2014.

Although the School System was able to implement these programs relying only on its departmental budget (mainly salaries and personnel related costs), which was $1,754,400 during the 2012-2013 school year; the department has not performed a fiscal assessment of its programs or an analysis of individual costs for each program.

RECOMMENDATION 1-R.1

Include cost-effectiveness measures in the evaluation of the Family and Community Partnership Department's programs to ensure program outcomes justify resources used.

The School System has allocated significant resources for academic and social support services through the Family and Community Partnerships Department. Working jointly with the Research, Assessment and Evaluation Department and applying the Return on Investment methodology the School System has been developing, the department should:

- develop cost-effective measures appropriate for its respective programs;
- specify the data that each program needs to collect for this analysis;
- design appropriate data collection tools and procedures for collecting these data;
- train staff in the data collection procedures;
- define the analytical techniques to be used and develop guidelines for interpretation of results; and
- test the methodology designed and refine it, as needed, and conduct cost-effectiveness evaluation component every three years to ensure program outcomes justify costs.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-S

Interviews during the onsite visit with community partners revealed that some volunteers feel better communication and definition of roles and responsibilities could make volunteer efforts and effectiveness even stronger.

The Family and Community Partnerships Department reported that they convene the School System's major community partners on a regular basis in a variety of smaller formats. Over 350 Academy partners meet in Partnership Councils, Community Achieves partners meet quarterly with their respective schools, and Alignment Nashville convenes 22 separate themed committees of community partners. According to the Family and Community Partnerships Department, all of these meetings are tied to very specific goals, timelines, roles and responsibilities, and, in some cases, program outcomes.

The review team conducted individual interviews and/or focus groups with several of the major parent and community involvement support organizations that plan and implement volunteer efforts in the School System. Many of the volunteer stakeholders stated that while their respective organizations work well together, periodic joint planning meetings would make them even more organized and productive. While all the organizations work together cooperatively to support the School System, areas of responsibility are often blurred and on occasion "needs gaps" occur because it is unclear which community partner will be responsible for certain activities.

RECOMMENDATION 1-S.1

Convene a bi-annual meeting with all major community partners to plan and discuss goals, roles and responsibilities, and expected program outcomes.

FISCAL IMPACT

The School System can implement this recommendation with existing resources.

OBSERVATION 1-T

The School System could benefit from additional fundraising sources utilized by another school system in the state.

Identifying potentially successful opportunities to raise money to improve student academic performance is often challenging. During the onsite visit to the School System, a representative from the executive leadership of the PENCIL Foundation expressed interest in undertaking selling coupon books for the benefit of the School System. Knox County Public Schools has successfully executed this type of fundraiser for the past 25 years. A representative from the PENCIL Foundation indicated that they have the necessary contacts within the School System and community to make the fundraising venture a success.

From a historical perspective, Knox County Public Schools stakeholders have sold over 3,300,000 coupon books raising nearly $29,000,000 to support educational initiatives. During the 2013 school year, the fundraiser generated just over $1,300,000 and averages over $1,000,000 in direct support annually. **Exhibit 1-45** depicts a summary of Knox County Public Schools' 25 Year fundraiser coupon book sales.

Exhibit 1-45
Summary of Knox County Public Schools' 25 Year Fundraiser Coupon Book Sales
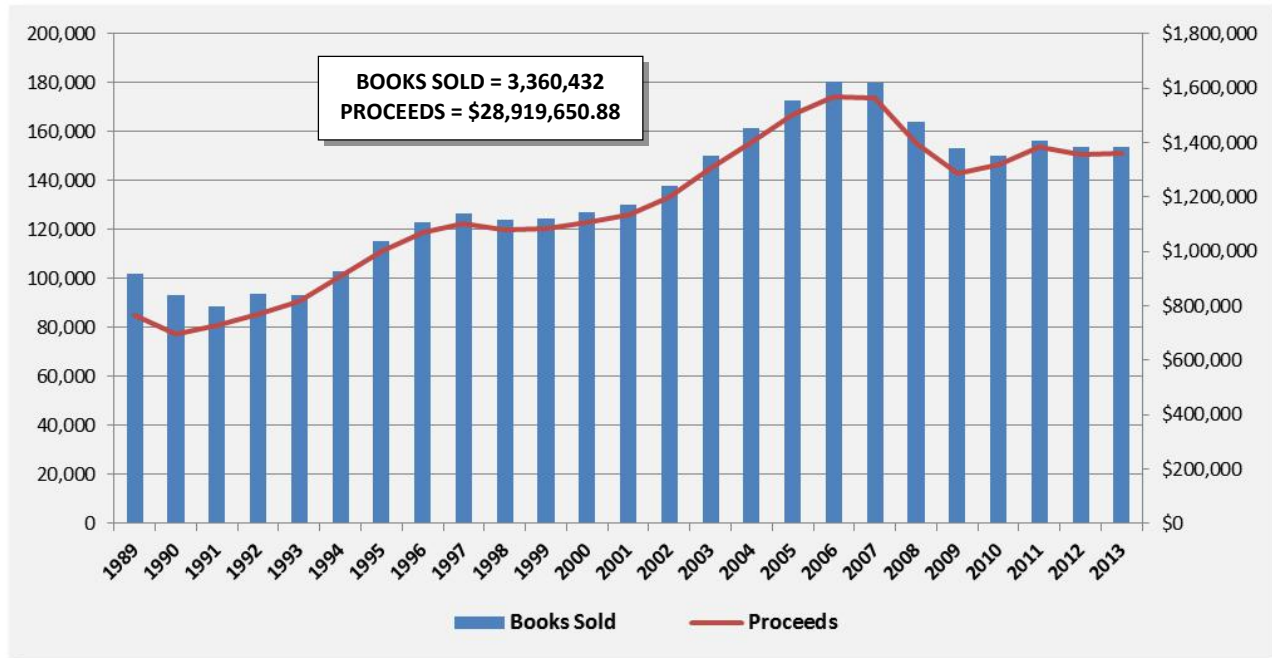
Source: Knox County Public Schools Website, June 2014.

Knox County Public Schools' Public Relations Office spearheads the fundraiser. The school system hires a private group to sell advertising in the form of a coupon book to local businesses throughout the Knoxville community offering discounts on products and services. The private group pays for the printing of the final published product.

The distribution of the coupon book is the primary selling point used to encourage advertisers to participate. The school system's students and stakeholders sell the coupon books, and the school system receives a percentage of the sales from all of the coupon books. The individual selling the coupon book is responsible for collecting the money at the point of sale. The school system does not incur operational or financial liability for the production of the coupon book.

As a fundraiser, the project is both "cost" and "time" effective. Local merchants, particularly small and medium-sized businesses, are motivated to participate because they understand that the distribution of their advertisements will reach a coveted market–parents and friends of school children. Ultimately, the sale of the coupon books is another vehicle to get community members involved in supporting the School System, while raising funds for the needs of students at the same time.

RECOMMENDATION 1-T.1

Explore adopting a systemwide coupon book sale fundraiser to provide supplemental resources for school programs.

If spearheaded by the PENCIL Foundation, this organization along with appointed central administration leadership and school personnel will be responsible for developing detailed operational protocols that include all administrative processes ranging from the recruitment of parent volunteers, student participants, promotional activities that encourage local merchant participation and the distribution of funds generated.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation would be categorized as revenue enhancement and, based on the longstanding fundraising successes of Knox County Public Schools can be estimated at $1,000,000 annually.

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY

	RECOMMENDATION	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019-2020	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS/	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT								
1-A.1	Provide targeted training for members of the board related to their roles and responsibilities in adhering to Policy Governance® to reduce the instances of board members' involvement in day-to-day operations that undermines the director of schools' authority.	($5,760)	($5,760)	($5,760)	($5,760)	($5,760)	($28,800)	$0
1-B.1	Conduct a series of teambuilding workshops to improve trust and communication among board members to enhance board deliberations for efficient and effective decision-making.	($2,400)	($2,400)	($2,400)	($2,400)	($2,400)	($12,000)	$0
1-C.1	Redesign the board's standing and ad hoc committee structure to reflect contemporary best practices for organizing school board committees to improve governing performance.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-D.1	Complete the design of the board's performance dashboard to provide board members with a tool to monitor the initiatives related to student achievement and administrative, financial, and operational performance.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY (Cont'd)

	RECOMMENDATION	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019-2020	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS/	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
	CHAPTER 1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT							
1-E.1	Modify existing processes within the Customer Service Center to establish a specific tracking, monitoring, and reporting protocol for handling board members' referrals of constituent matters.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-F.1	Conduct a strategic planning retreat to re-engage the board in the strategic planning process to review the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-G.1	Develop specific strategies and tactics to include in the School System's internal communications plan to communicate key messages, initiatives, and directives from the executive leadership team meetings to the employees throughout the system.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-H.1	Integrate teambuilding retreats into the cycle of periodic leadership development retreats scheduled for the executive leadership team to enhance relationship-building and collaboration.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

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FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY (Cont'd)

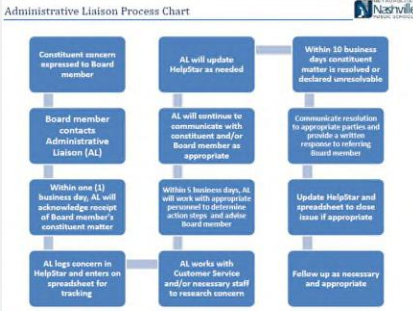|	RECOMMENDATION	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019-2020	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS/	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
	CHAPTER 1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT							
1-I.1	Revise the format for monthly principals meetings to allocate time to obtain feedback from principals through two-way dialogue with the executive officers for elementary and secondary schools.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-J.1	Modify the evaluation process for principals to require executive lead principals to conduct annual performance evaluations for building principals with input from network lead principals.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-K.1	Communicate to principals how to access and use the common calendar on the School System's website that codifies all meetings and events scheduled by central office departments to facilitate advance planning and schedule management.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-L.1	Establish mandatory school-level advisory committees at all schools to allow school staff, parents, and community members representative of the school community to be involved in the system's decision-making process.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-M.1	Expand the types of school-level decisions principals can make during the School System's three-year transition to school autonomy.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY (Cont'd)

	RECOMMENDATION	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019-2020	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS/	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT							
1-N.1	Use the Principals Leadership Institute to train principals to manage their schools once they achieve autonomy from the central office.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-O.1	Evaluate the School System's assistant principal staffing formula for inclusion of other relevant factors that may influence the assignment of assistant principals along with consideration of AdvancED recommended standards. Then, review assistant principal positions for optimal staffing levels.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-P.1	Develop a comprehensive set of staffing guidelines for all support staff positions assigned to campuses that more accurately reflect not only student enrollments, but also other relevant factors that influence the assignment of support staff.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-Q.1	Develop a comprehensive plan to effectively communicate the School System's five year strategic plan and other key initiatives to internal and external stakeholders.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY (Cont'd)

	RECOMMENDATION	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019-2020	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) SAVINGS/	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
	CHAPTER 1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT							
1-Q.2	Select a wide cross-section of parent, community members and business/civic partners and administer focus groups and surveys to them annually to obtain feedback regarding systemwide communications initiatives.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-Q.3	Evaluate the Communications Plan on an annual basis.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-R.1	Include cost-effectiveness measures in the evaluation of the Family and Community Partnership Department's programs to ensure program outcomes justify resources used.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-S.1	Convene a bi-annual meeting with all major community partners to plan and discuss goals, roles and responsibilities, and expected program outcomes.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
1-T.1	Explore adopting a systemwide coupon book sale fundraiser to provide supplemental resources for school programs.	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$5,000,000	$0
TOTALS–CHAPTER 1		**$991,840**	**$991,840**	**$991,840**	**$991,840**	**$991,840**	**$4,959,200**	**$0**

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
Management of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools should:			

1-E.1	Modify existing processes within the Customer Service Center to establish a specific tracking, monitoring, and reporting protocol for handling board members' referrals of constituent matters.	**Partially Accept**
		A. During the time the audit interviews were underway, MNPS was in the process of hiring someone to specifically manage/handle constituent matters submitted by the School Board. This person's role is to ensure the complaint feeds completely through the resolution/response loop and keeps the School Board member who submitted the issue well-informed of progress and/or resolution.
		   o The School Boards' Administrative Liaison started with MNPS in **July 2014**. A snapshot of the process followed is shown here. This protocol fully addresses recommendation 1-E.1 regarding tracking, monitoring, and reporting protocol for handling board members' referrals of constituent matters.
		
		B. In addition to what is shared above, MNPS has also strengthened the way resolved constituent issues can be further heard after an appeal has been filed. On **Aug. 15, 2014**, Director of Schools Dr. Jesse Register appointed Chief Support Services Officer Dr. Tony Majors to chair the appeal board. The Constituent Appeal Board Hearings are fully documented for transparency of criteria utilized to base final decisions.
		
		C. MNPS defends that the protocol of the Customer Service Center (CSC) is sufficient to support submission of School Board member constituent complaints, but honors the request of the School Board members for a liaison specifically tied to their submissions. It is this defense that required the process managed by the Board's administrative liaison to align directly with the process and tools used by the CSC.
		   o Complaints officially submitted through the established structure (Customer Service Center), are tracked and addressed, with potential for a small margin of error. Even though the resolution may not always be the one sought by the constituent, MNPS is always open to feedback and looks for ways to continuously improve its processes to ensure they meet the specific needs and interests of its customers.
			August 2014
			
			Position in place, constituent issue management process documented, and appeal board leadership named

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
1-G.1	Develop specific strategies and tactics to include in the School System's internal communications plan to communicate key messages, initiatives, and directives from the executive leadership team meetings to the employees throughout the system.	**Accept** A. Weekly priorities/messages were consistently developed following each Executive Leadership Team (ELT) meeting starting at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year by the Assistant to the Director for Communications. These messages were then shared with the ELT and they in turn shared them with their direct reports, which included principals. Currently, this method of communication is being evaluated for effectiveness as part of the development of a strategic communications plan. B. Chief Officers regularly convene (normally weekly) individual leadership team meetings following ELT meetings to share system priorities and other cross-cutting issues for action. C. Monthly Principal meetings are held where the Director of Schools brings forward system priorities, political information that has implications for local and national education work, and any other themes that have arisen from the last exchange. D. Further expand/evaluate internal strategies as part of the communications plan.	Multiple communication methods were either expanded on or implemented during the 2013-14 school year. Communications Plan expected completion by June 2015
1-H.1	Integrate teambuilding retreats into the cycle of periodic leadership development retreats scheduled for the executive leadership team to enhance relationship-building and collaboration.	**Accept** Strategies for a highly effective team have always been embedded in Executive Leadership Team (ELT) retreats, but there have also been specific retreats designed to address this topic. For example, in January 2012, the ELT participated in a retreat that included topics such as: • Overcoming the Five (5) Dysfunctions of a Team and • Communicating to Build Understanding, Support, and Acceptance. In addition to the October date previously listed, there were specific teambuilding retreats held Oct. 29, 2012 and April 22, 2013.	Previous dates referenced: January 2012 to April 2013
1-I.1	Revise the format for monthly principals meetings to allocate time to obtain feedback from principals through two-way dialogue with the executive officers for elementary and secondary schools.	**Accept** The format of monthly principal meetings has been changed in 2014-15. Principals have two hours with the Director of Schools before moving into one-hour network meetings led by the lead principal. After lunch, principals move into a three-hour session organized by tiers and led by the executive officers. During this time, principals are meeting in small groups, whole group, and across tiers to have dialogue and discussion. Key principals are asked to facilitate and lead discussions and presentations.	Completed in 2014-15

	Recommendation		Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
1-J.1	Modify the evaluation process for principals to require executive lead principals to conduct annual performance evaluations for building principals with input from network lead principals.	**Reject** The majority of principals are members of a network of five schools led by a Network Lead Principal. The Network Lead Principal receives additional money and the equivalent of an assistant principal FTE to lead the network and evaluate the principals in the network. The district office staff was reduced to decentralize leadership decisions and give principals additional autonomy. This decentralized model, which began in 2013, is showing promise and will continue to develop to include all principals by SY 2016-2017.		N/A
1-K.1	Communicate to principals how to access and use the common calendar on the School System's website that codifies all meetings and events scheduled by central office departments to facilitate advance planning and schedule management.	**Accept** This recommendation will be incorporated into the new strategic communications plan currently in-development.		June 2015
1-L.1	Establish mandatory school-level advisory committees at all schools to allow school staff, parents, and community members representative of the school community to be involved in the system's decision-making process.	**Partially Accept** The school improvement planning (SIP) team is already required and in place at each school. The SIP team is comprised of teachers, administration, parents, students, and community members. Advisory committees already exist in all zoned high schools within the academy model. These advisory boards are comprised of students, teachers, and business partners. Further development of school level advisory committees is questionable; however, MNPS will work to further identify roles and responsibilities.		Implemented in 2010

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
1-M.1	Expand the types of school-level decisions principals can make during the School System's three-year transition to school autonomy.	**Accept** During the 2013-14 school year, there were 17 schools (all I-Zone schools and schools led by a network lead principal) piloting school based budgeting. In 2014-15, all high school, middle school, and a few elementary school principals piloted school-based budgeting. These principals implemented budget flexibility and staffing during the two pilot years. All MNPS principals will implement student-based budgeting in 2015-16.	SY 2015-2016
1-N.1	Use the Principals Leadership Institute to train principals to manage their schools once they achieve autonomy from the central office.	**Partially Accept** The Principal Leadership Institute (PLI) is more than training for budget autonomy. The PLI is designed to share best practices, innovative ideas, new programs, leadership development, and development of instructional capacity. Principals have autonomy in budget flexibility and staffing and have monthly professional development to share best practices, exchanges ideas, and discuss managerial aspects of the principal job at monthly principal meetings.	PLI was implemented in 2009. Professional development conducted monthly.
1-O.1	Evaluate the School System's assistant principal staffing formula for inclusion of other relevant factors that may influence the assignment of assistant principals along with consideration of AdvancED recommended standards. Then review assistant principal positions for optimal staffing levels.	**Reject** MNPS follows a staffing formula as the baseline for allocating assistant principals based on the number of students enrolled in the building. Staffing is reviewed annually for every school during the budget process. Principals have autonomy over their budgets and may choose to purchase additional assistant principals above the staffing allocation. Also, the district considers programmatic needs, economically disadvantaged populations, exceptional education needs, and academic achievement when assigning additional assistant principal positions. Principals who are selected as Network Lead Principals are also allocated a position equivalent to an assistant principal to use in the building as needed. This allows the lead principal to be out of the building working with schools in his/her network. Following a rigid staffing formula would not provide principals flexibility in their staffing or allow the district to assign additional assistant principals based on need. The audit report specifically states, "AdvancED's recommended staffing levels for assistant principals are by no means prescriptive; they clearly serve as a benchmark for comparison to determine **minimum** administrative staffing levels." MNPS assistant principals are not only performing administrative functions, but primarily act as instructional leaders. This "minimum" staffing level cited does not include all the staffing considerations MNPS listed above like economically disadvantaged populations and exceptional education needs.	N/A

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
1-P.1	Develop a comprehensive set of staffing guidelines for all support staff positions assigned to campuses that more accurately reflect not only student enrollments, but also other relevant factors that influence the assignment of support staff.	**Partially Accept** Beginning in SY15-16, the majority of school-based positions – support, certificated, and certificated administration – will no longer be assigned directly to the majority of schools. MNPS is transitioning to a model of school-level flexibility and student-based budgeting where schools will receive an allocation of resources (dollars, not positions) based on the number and type of students they serve. Principals will have the flexibility to determine the mix of staff positions in their building, within certain parameters. MNPS will develop guidance for principals on recommended and, in some cases, non-negotiable staffing levels for certain certificated and support positions.	SY 2015-2016
1-Q.1	Develop a comprehensive plan to effectively communicate the School System's five–year strategic plan and other key initiatives to internal and external stakeholders.	**Partially Accept** This recommendation will be incorporated into the new strategic communications plan currently in development. However, communications regarding the strategic plan to date have been embedded in internal and external publications, meeting agendas/work sessions, board presentations, Director of School's and other leaders' presentations to various audiences (including parents), as well as school-level and departmental strategic action plans. The strategic plan was also a major component of the online module-based training completed by at least 98% of MNPS teachers over the course of 6+ months in 2014 and continues to be consistently shared in the same online training for all new teachers.	Strategic Communications Plan Completion June 2015
1-Q.2	Select a wide cross-section of parent, community members and business/civic partners and administer focus groups and surveys to them annually to obtain feedback regarding system-wide communications initiatives.	**Accept** This recommendation will be incorporated into planning and development of district's new strategic communications plan.	June 2015
1-Q.3	Evaluate the Communications plan on an annual basis.	**Accept** This recommendation will be a component of the timeline built into the district's new strategic communications plan for the evaluation of the plan/work.	June 2015

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
1-R.1	Include cost-effectiveness measures in the evaluation of the Family and Community Partnership Department programs to ensure program outcomes justify resources used.	**Accept** The Department of Family and Community Partnerships currently evaluates all events, but MNPS agrees a more comprehensive annual assessment of the department is needed and should be developed.	July 2015
1-S.1	Convene a bi-annual meeting with all major community partners to plan and discuss goals, roles and responsibilities and expected program outcomes.	**Accept** The Support Services Department currently meets with community agencies engaged in the Community Achieves process three to four times per year, but this convening does not effectively reach all community partners working with the district. This observation would most effectively be accomplished as a function of the School Board's Community Engagement Committee.	August 2015
1-T.1	Explore adopting a system-wide coupon book sale fundraiser to provide supplemental resources for school programs.	**Reject** Decision-making around which fundraisers should or should not be conducted are made autonomously by each school leader in conjunction with his/her school leadership teams and supporting parent/community organizations. During a principals' meeting in early 2014, a presentation regarding sale of a coupon book was made to all principals as an option for participation. Principals would have to decide if the opportunity warranted further exploration or presentation to their schools.	N/A

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Education should:			
1-A.1	Provide targeted training for members of the board related to their roles and responsibilities in adhering to Policy Governance® to reduce the instances of board members' involvement in day-to-day operations that undermines the director of schools' authority.	**Accept**	
1-B.1	Conduct a series of teambuilding workshops to improve trust and communication among board members to enhance board deliberations for efficient and effective decision-making.	**Accept**	
1-C.1	Redesign the board's standing and ad hoc committee structure to reflect contemporary best practices for organizing school board committees to improve governing performance.	**Accept**	
1-D.1	Complete the design of the board's performance dashboard to provide board members with a tool to monitor the initiatives related to student achievement and administrative, financial, and operational performance.	**Accept**	
1-F.1	Conduct a strategic planning retreat to re-engage the board in the strategic planning process to review the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student.	**Accept**	

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Education should:			
1-A.1	Provide targeted training for members of the board related to their roles and responsibilities in adhering to Policy Governance® to reduce the instances of board members' involvement in day-to-day operations that undermines the director of schools' authority.	**Accept**	June 2015
1-B.1	Conduct a series of teambuilding workshops to improve trust and communication among board members to enhance board deliberations for efficient and effective decision-making.	**Accept**	Now through December 2015
1-C.1	Redesign the board's standing and ad hoc committee structure to reflect contemporary best practices for organizing school board committees to improve governing performance.	**Accept**	Done
1-D.1	Complete the design of the board's performance dashboard to provide board members with a tool to monitor the initiatives related to student achievement and administrative, financial, and operational performance.	**Accept**	April 2015
1-F.1	Conduct a strategic planning retreat to re-engage the board in the strategic planning process to review the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student.	**Accept**	February/March 2015

Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Education should:		
1-A.1 Provide targeted training for members of the board related to their roles and responsibilities in adhering to Policy Governance® to reduce the instances of board members' involvement in day-to-day operations that undermines the director of schools' authority.	**Partially accept.** If there are instances of board members interfering in the school system's day-to-day operations, then training should be directed at individual board members, versus the whole board.	
1-B.1 Conduct a series of teambuilding workshops to improve trust and communication among board members to enhance board deliberations for efficient and effective decision-making.	**Reject.** Some board members have competing agendas driven by special interests and/or community concerns. Trust-building workshops are not going to solve that challenge.	
1-C.1 Redesign the board's standing and ad hoc committee structure to reflect contemporary best practices for organizing school board committees to improve governing performance.	**Accept.** I like this recommendation and, in fact, this work already has begun.	
1-D.1 Complete the design of the board's performance dashboard to provide board members with a tool to monitor the initiatives related to student achievement and administrative, financial, and operational performance.	**Accept.** Let's ensure alignment with the director's evaluation tool, which is in the process of being redesigned.	
1-F.1 Conduct a strategic planning retreat to re-engage the board in the strategic planning process to review the goals, objectives, and strategies included in Education 2018: Excellence for Every Student.	**Partially Accept.** This should occur following the appointment of a new director, with an eye toward granting the new leader the leeway to develop his or her own ideas in collaboration with the board.	