# CHAPTER 2 – EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY

BACKGROUND

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (the School System) is the 42nd largest urban School System in the nation, covering the city of Nashville and Davidson County, an area of approximately 533 square miles. The School System had 81,033 students in 2012-2013 and 82,863 students at the start of 2013-2014. The distribution of students by school level is shown in **Exhibit 2-1**.

Exhibit 2-1
Number of Students by School Level
2012-2013 and 2013-2014*
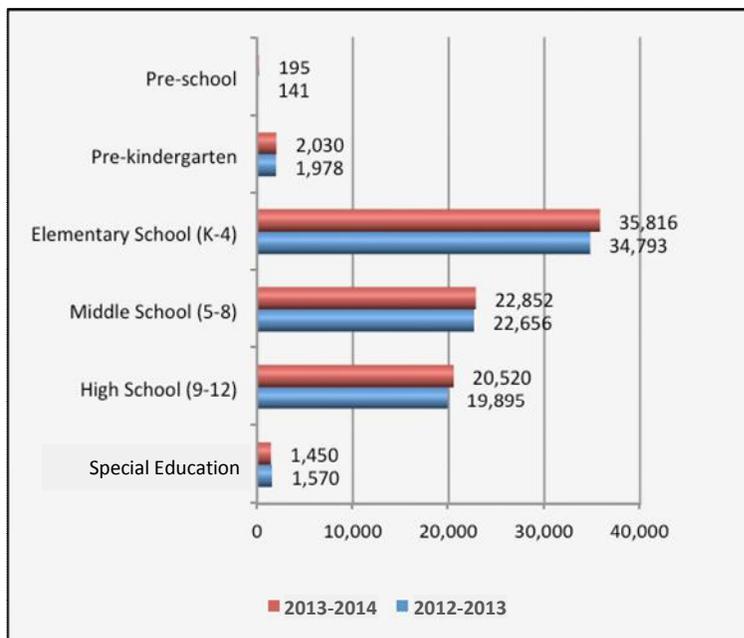
Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2012-2013 Facts and 2013-2014 Facts.
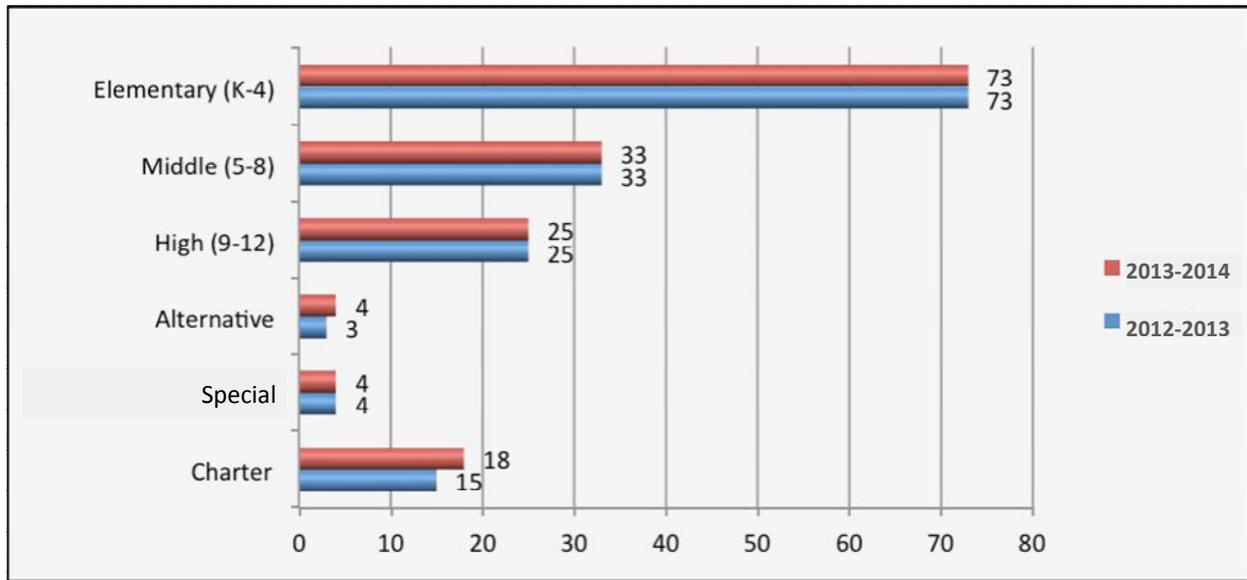**2013-2014 data reflect the 20-day count.*

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

- The School System has developed an innovative process for determining the extent to which each campus is providing a high-quality education for students.

- Planned expansion for Pre-K is research-based and should provide positive long-term effects for participants.

- The Career Technical Education program offers courses in a wide range of high-skill/wage/demand occupations and is supported by extensive business participation and university partnerships.

- A comprehensive student, teacher, and school data warehouse has been created that is used to inform decisions and guide instruction.

- Improving the ratio of high-poverty to low-poverty populations in K-8 schools can result in improved academic achievement of low income students.

- Implementing proven behavior management strategies will improve overall discipline. It will also reduce racial disparities in discipline and in disproportional assignments to alternative learning centers.

- Continued development and improvement of support structure, staff, curriculum, and instructional strategies will increase the language proficiency and academic preparedness of English language learners.

The School System had 153 campuses in 2012-2013 and 157 campuses in 2013-2014. **Exhibit 2-2** reflects the number of campuses by school level.

Exhibit 2-2
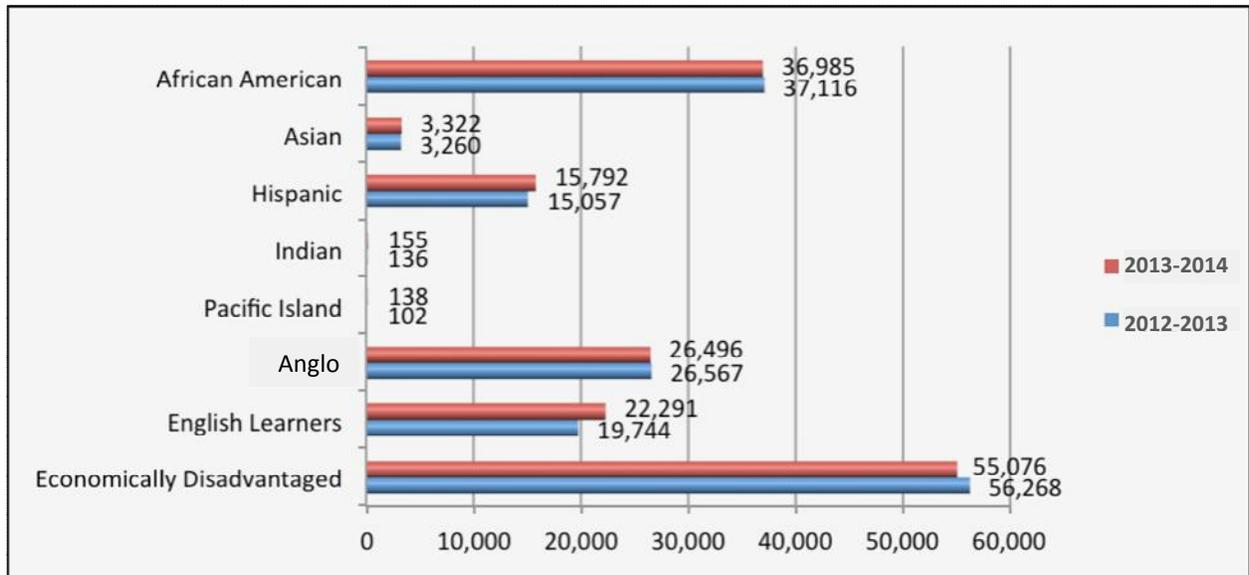**Number of Schools by School Level**
2012-2013 and 2013-2014*

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2012-2013 Facts and 2013-2014 Facts.
*2013-2014 data reflect the 20-day count.

The School System is diverse, serving students from 120 countries speaking as many different languages. In addition, a high percentage of economically disadvantaged and exceptional needs students are represented in the system. African American students comprise the largest population group with 45.8 percent in 2012-2013 and 45.0 percent in 2013-2014, followed by Caucasian students who comprised 33.3 percent in 2012-2013 and 32.0 percent in 2013-2014. Hispanic students constituted 16.6 percent in 2012-2013 and 19.0 percent in 2013-2014. About two-thirds of the students were economically disadvantaged in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014: 69.4 percent and 66.5 percent, respectively. About one-quarter of the students are English Language Learners: 24.0 percent in 2012-2013 and 26.9 percent in 2013-2014, as shown in **Exhibit 2-3**.

Exhibit 2-3
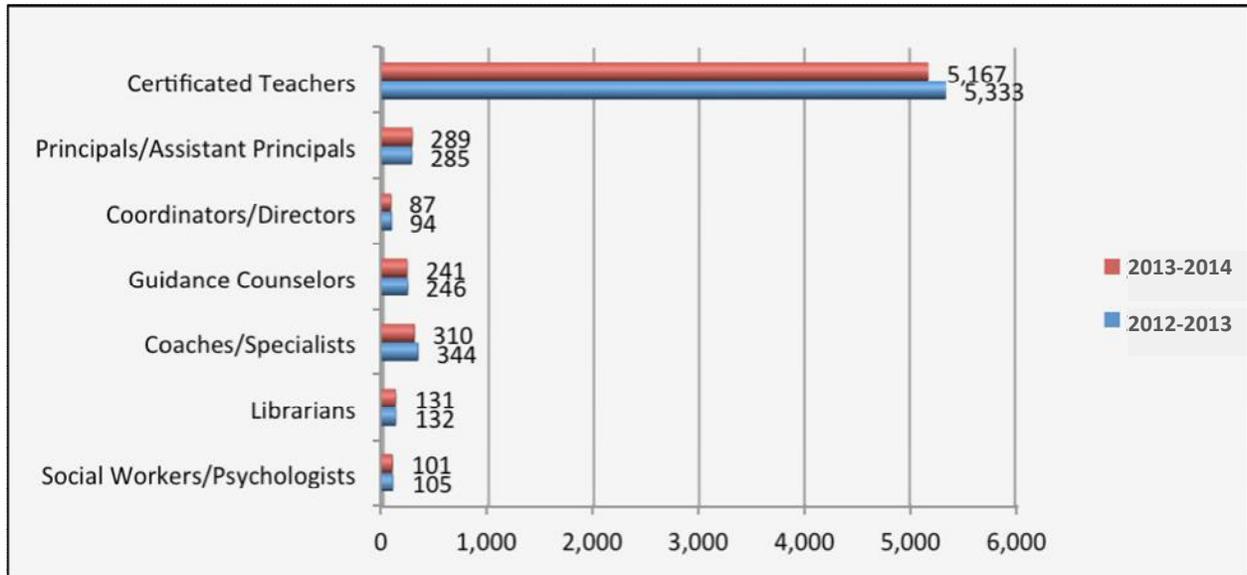**Student Demographics**
2012-2013 and 2013-2014*

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2012-2013 Facts and 2013-2014 Facts.
*2013-2014 data reflect the 20-day count.

In its effort to promote diversity in its schools, the School System has established a process in which students can apply to 82 of its non-zoned magnet and optional schools on a space-available basis. Transportation is provided through the Metropolitan Transit Authority for students who qualify for the federal free/reduced price meal program and to students with disabilities, in accordance with their Individualized Education Plan. All charter schools are open to enrollment by any student living in Davidson County with transportation provided. The School System also provides 'zoned-option' areas in which students may transfer from their attendance zone school to another school with transportation provided.

The School System had 5,333 certificated teachers in 2012-2013; in 2013-2014 the number of teachers declined 3.1 percent to 5,167. Nearly all the teachers, 99.8 percent, are highly qualified. **Exhibit 2-4** shows the number of certificated staff by category.

Exhibit 2-4
Number of School Certificated Staff
2012-2013 and 2013-2014*

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2012-2013 Facts and 2013-2014 Facts.
*2013-2014 data reflect the 20-day count.

Teachers' years of experience varied by school level, as shown in **Exhibit 2-5**. On average, the School System's elementary school teachers had the greatest number of years of experience while high school teachers had the least.

Exhibit 2-5
Certificated Teachers
2012-2013 and 2013-2014*

Teachers	2012-2013	2013-2014*
Certificated Teachers	5,333	5,167
Average Years of Experience		
Elementary Schools	11.95 years	11.54 years
Middle Schools	10.82 years	10.89 years
High Schools	9.90 years	10.84 years

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2012-2013 Facts and 2013-2014 Facts.
*2013-2014 data reflect the 20-day count.

The School System spent 73.1 percent of their operating budget on academics in 2012-2013, and 70.6 percent in 2013-2014 as shown in **Exhibit 2-6**. Between 13.4 percent of its budget in 2012-2013, and 11.3 percent in 2013-2014, came from federal funds.

Exhibit 2-6
Budget 2012-2013 and 2013-2014*

	2012-2013	2013-2014*
Total Operating Expenditure Budget	$720,420,300	$746,420,300
Curriculum and Instruction	$491,684,600	$527,031,800
Percent of Operating Budget	73.1%	70.6%
Federal Funds (Grants)	$96,272,000	$84,598,000
Percent Federal Funds (Grants)	13.4%	11.3%

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2012-2013 Facts and 2013-2014 Facts.
*2013-2014 data reflect the 20-day count.

Exhibit 2-7 depicts the School System's educational service delivery organization and the number of administrators and staff.

Exhibit 2-7
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Educational Service Delivery Organizational Chart and Staffing
2013-2014

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Office of Chief Academic Officer, February 2014.

Exhibit 2-7
Educational Service Delivery Chart and Staffing 2013-2014

Staffing	Office of Chief Academic Officer	Office of English Learners	Office of Exceptional Education	Office of Innovation	Learning Technology & Library Services	Federal Programs & Grant Management	Research Assessment & Evaluation
Leadership	Chief Academic Officer						
Executive Officers	3			1			
Executive Directors	7	1	1		1	1	1
Directors	7	1	3	2		2	
Coordinators	5	8	6	4	3	1	7
Managers				1	1	3	
Lead Principals	6						
Leader Principals				10			
Lead Librarian					1		
Instructional Designer				10	5		
Transformation Facilitators				7			
School improvement Program Facilitators						9	
Coaches		8	33.5				12
Specialists		8		1	4	4	
Analysts						1	1
Librarians					130		
Library Aides					81.5		
Counselors	212						
Speech Pathologists			80.5				
Occupational Therapists			31.5				
Other Special Education Professionals			2.5				
Special Education Teachers			602.6				
Homebound Teachers			8				
Itinerant Teachers		29	27				
Interpreters for the Deaf			18				
Technology Trainer			1		2		
Paraprofessionals/Aides			543				
Assessors		6					
Translators		47					
Administrative Assistants	5	1	3	1		3	2
Secretaries	10	1		1	1	3	
Campus Support Staff							
Other staff	8	3			3		3

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Organizational Charts, February 2014.

To meet the needs of its students, the School System serves students from pre-school through Grade 12 in a variety of grade configurations as shown in **Exhibit 2-8** and offers a variety of academic programs plus a large number of extracurricular and athletic programs. Twenty traditional schools—seven at the elementary level, eight at the middle school level, and five at the high school level—also have magnet school programs. Academic program offerings include multiple Advanced Placement courses and an International Baccalaureate Programme; the Cambridge international education programme at all three levels: ninth grade and theme-based academies at all 12 zoned high schools; and charter, magnet, specialty, and optional enrollment schools at all levels. The International Baccalaureate Programme is currently offered in nine schools—two elementary schools, five middle schools, and two high schools— with the newly created International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate also offered at one of the two high schools. In addition, the application for authorization as a World School will be submitted in July 2014 by a third high school. To serve students who need a more non-traditional learning environment, the School System provides alternative learning centers for those with behavioral issues, three high schools serving students ages 17 to 21, and for students ages 19 and up. The district also offers Cambridge courses in seven schools – one elementary school, two middle schools, and four high schools. Students at the Cambridge high schools will have the opportunity to complete course requirements in order to achieve the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Diploma.

Exhibit 2-8
Grade Configurations of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Grade Configuration	Traditional Schools	Specialty Schools	Charter Schools	Total
PreSchool-4	2			2
Pre-K Only		1		1
PreK-4	55			55
PreK-5	2	1		3
PreK-12		1		1
K only			2	2
K-2			1	1
K-4	13		1	14
K-5	1			1
K-6			1	1
K-8		1		1
K-12		1		1
5 only			3	3
5-6			1	1
5-7			3	4
5-8	31	1	4	36
5-12	1			1
6-8	1			1
7-8	1		1	2
7-12	1			1
8 only	1			1
9-10	1			1
9-12	17	2	1	20
10-12	1			1
11-12	3			3
Total	**131**	**8**	**18**	**157**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public School 2013-2014, Revised 3-10-14 and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools School Option: Apply.

Beginning in 2006, the School System began a redesign of its 12 zoned high schools into small learning communities, emphasizing project-based instruction as one of its primary initiatives to prepare students for college and career. In addition to a ninth grade academy, each high school has between one and five 'career cluster' academies in grades 10-12, developed in partnership with civic and business organizations shown in **Exhibit 2-15**. The academies are grouped into five categories: Arts, Media and Communications; Business, Marketing and Information Technology; Engineering, Manufacturing, and industrial Technology; Health and Public Services; and Hospitality and Tourism.

The Tennessee Department of Education has established measureable goals for the improvement of education in the state's school systems and uses various data to monitor progress. The goal is to raise student achievement and reduce the achievement gaps among and between student groups. The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System measures student progress within a grade and subject, demonstrating the influence the school has on students' performance. The Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program compiles data on state and district-level 3-8 achievement, high school End-of-Course examinations, and achievement gap results. The state department produces an annual Report Card which provides a variety of state, district, and school-level data including demographics, achievement results, accountability progress, value-added data, attendance data, graduation rates, and average American College Test composite and subject scores.

Students in Grades 3-8 take the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program achievement test. It is a timed, multiple choice assessment that measures skills in reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies. High school students take End-of-Course exams in Algebra I and II; Biology I; English I, II, and III; and US History. The results of the End-of-Course exams are factored into students' final grades at a percentage determined by the State Board of Education, currently set at 25 percent. Students are not required to pass any one exam but must achieve a passing score for the course. The 2012-2013 test results indicate that the percent of the School System's students that tested 'below basic' and 'basic' was higher (less desirable) than the percent of students statewide on all subjects tested on both the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment and the End-of-Course exams. The percent of the School System's students scoring 'proficient' and' advanced' was also lower than the percent of students statewide on both type assessments as illustrated in **Exhibit 2-9.**

Exhibit 2-9
Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program and End-of-Course Results
State and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

		Percent Below Basic	Percent Basic	Percent Proficient	Percent Advanced	Percent Prof/Adv	Gain Prof/ Adv 2011-2012 to 2012-2013
Grades 3-8							
State	Math	15.6	33.7	30.3	20.4	50.7	na
	Read/LA	11.9	37.8	38.5	11.8	50.3	na
	Science	14.2	23.2	44.1	18.5	62.6	na
	Social Studies	0.0	15.2	41.1	43.7	84.8	na
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	Math	21.1	36.5	26.8	15.6	42.4	3.0
	Read/LA	17.0	43.1	31.3	8.6	39.9	(0.7)
	Science	23.9	30.3	35.7	10.1	45.8	0.9
	Social Studies	0.0	23.8	46.2	30.0	76.2	0.8
Grades 9-12							
State	Algebra I	15.5	24.2	30.6	29.7	60.3	na
	Algebra II	24.0	34.0	28.6	13.4	42.0	na
	Biology I	15.5	22.2	45.6	16.7	62.3	na
	English I	8.8	23.1	55.1	13.0	68.1	na
	English II	10.5	30.0	49.2	10.3	59.5	na
	English III	22.6	37.8	26.4	13.2	39.6	na
	US History	0.0	3.9	47.2	48.9	96.1	na
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	Algebra I	21.0	27.6	31.4	20.0	51.4	9.6
	Algebra II	43.3	32.5	17.7	6.5	24.2	7.1
	Biology I	26.9	26.9	38.2	8.0	46.2	8.9
	English I	14.8	28.8	47.8	8.6	56.4	1.8
	English II	15.5	37.0	40.6	6.9	47.5	(1.2)
	English III	34.7	39.8	18.8	6.7	25.5	3.8
	US History	0.0	0.0	63.0	28.1	91.1	2.0

Source: Report Card; Tennessee Department of Education.

To compete in today's technology-based economy, many well-paying jobs now require some postsecondary education. In many instances, however, students desiring to pursue college work find it difficult due to discrepancies between their educational goals and the courses completed in high school. As a result, efforts are being made to improve the college and career readiness of high school graduates such as the development of the Common Core State Standards. States and school systems are placing greater importance on college readiness assessments such as the American College Test (ACT) and the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). Every high school student in Tennessee is required to take the American College Test in grades 11 and 12. The American College Test also provides two additional assessments of college readiness and academic performance, EXPLORE at grade 8 and PLAN at grade 10. Beginning in 2014-2015, ASPIRE, a new assessment designed to follow students from the elementary grades through early high school, will begin replacing EXPLORE and PLAN as the ACT college readiness assessment system.

The American College Test has established 'readiness benchmarks' for its subject-area tests. The benchmarks represent the level of achievement for students to have a 50 percent chance of making a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of making a C or higher in 'corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses.' The college courses and corresponding benchmark for the test given in grades 11 and 12 are English Composition (18), College Algebra (22), Social Sciences (22), and Biology (23). The School System has established a target in its strategic plan of increasing the percent of grade 3-8 students on track for 21 or higher on the American College Test Composite from 15 percent in 2011-2012 to 40 percent in 2017-2018. The target for the percent of seniors scoring 21 or higher is 50 percent, up from 29 percent in 2011-2012.

The 3-year average scores in 2010 and 2013 of the School System's students were lower than those of students statewide in all subjects tested on both the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program and the American College Test. The net change in the 3-year averages from 2010 to 2013 was better than or equal to those statewide in math, reading, and social studies but worse in science shown in **Exhibit 2-10**.

Exhibit 2-10
Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program and ACT Scores
State and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2009-2010 to 2012-2013

	2009-2010	2012-2013	Net Change
State			
Math 3-Year Average	49	55	6
Reading 3-Year Average	49	51	2
Social Studies 3-Year Average	51	56	5
Science 3-Year Average	49	52	3
ACT 3-Year Composite	19.5	19.0	(0.5)
ACT 3-Year English Average	19.3	18.7	(0.6)
ACT 3-Year Math Average	18.9	18.7	(0.2)
ACT 3-Year Reading Average	19.7	19.3	(0.4)
ACT 3-Year Science Average	19.4	19.1	(0.3)
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools			
Math 3-Year Average	44	50	6
Reading 3-Year Average	43	46	3
Social Studies 3-Year Average	44	49	5
Science 3-Year Average	45	45	0
ACT 3-Year Composite	18.7	18.2	(0.5)
ACT 3-Year English Average	18.5	17.8	(0.7)
ACT 3-Year Math Average	18.1	17.8	(0.3)
ACT 3-Year Reading Average	18.9	18.4	(0.5)
ACT 3-Year Science Average	18.9	18.4	(0.5)

Source: Report Card; Tennessee Department of Education.

The 2012-2013 attendance and promotion rates for the School System's students in Grades K-8 were equal to or slightly better than that of students statewide. For students at grades 9-12, the dropout rate was almost 70 percent higher than students statewide and the graduation rate almost 10 percentage points lower than students statewide. For African American students, the graduation rate was only two percentage points lower than African American students statewide shown in **Exhibit 2-11**.

Exhibit 2-11
Attendance, Promotion, and Graduation Rates
State and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools 2012-2013

	State	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
K-8 Attendance Rate*	95.4	95.4
K-8 Promotion Rate**	98.2	98.4
Cohort Dropout Rate***	7.3	12.4
Graduation Rate****	86.3	76.6
Anglo Graduation Rate	89.8	78.9
African American Graduation Rate	77.8	75.8
Hispanic Graduation Rate	81.3	72.3
Asian Graduation Rate	90.3	81.8

Source: Report Card; Tennessee Department of Education.
*The average number of days students attend school as compared to the average number of days the students are enrolled.
**Those students who are promoted to the next grade each year.
***The percentage of students who entered the 9th grade that dropped out by the end of the 12th grade.
****Based on the US Department of Education 4-year adjusted cohort formula based on when the student entered ninth grade plus or minus those who transfer, emigrate, or die over a 4-year period including summer terms.

In addition to state accountability measures, the School System has developed a system for evaluating school performance, the Academic Performance Framework (see ACCOMPLISHMENT A-2). Each system school is evaluated on multiple measures including academic performance, academic growth of all students and of specific groups of students, and school climate. Graduation rate is an added measure for high schools. Schools receive one of five ratings: excelling, achieving, satisfactory, review, or target.

Observations regarding conclusions that might be drawn from the three years of Academic Performance Framework data are mixed as demonstrated in **Exhibit 2-12**. Between 2011 and 2013, the number of K-8 schools receiving one of the top two ratings, 'excelling' or 'achieving,' increased slightly from 16 to 17, both of which represented slightly over 14 percent of all rated schools. The number of 'review' and 'target' rated schools increased significantly over that same period, from 38 to 57, or from about one-third of all rated schools to 47.1 percent.

For 9-12 schools, the trend differs slightly. The number of top rated schools increased from three to seven, or from 2.6 percent of all rated schools to 5.7 percent; however, 'review' and 'target' rated schools also increased from 3 of 18 schools (16.6 percent) in 2011 to 5 of 22 schools (22.7 percent) in 2013.

Exhibit 2-12
Academic Performance Framework 2011-2013

	2011 Status	2012 Status	2013 Status
Schools Grades K-8			
Excelling	7	23	11
Achieving	9	11	6
Satisfactory	59	58	47
Review	16	11	30
Target	22	15	27
Schools Grades K-8 Totals*	113	118	121
Schools Grades 9-12			
Excelling	2	3	2
Achieving	1	0	5
Satisfactory	12	7	10
Review	2	3	3
Target	1	7	2
Schools Grades 9-12 Totals*	18	20	22
All Schools			
Excelling	9	26	13
Achieving	10	11	11
Satisfactory	71	65	57
Review	18	14	33
Target	23	22	29
Grand Total*	**131**	**138**	**143**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.
*Does not include schools with less than three years of data.

The School System indicates that a goal of observing the Academic Performance Framework data over time is to see how many schools are moving upward on the various measures within the Framework. Of those schools having sufficient data to receive three years of ratings, 54 (47 K-8 schools and seven 9-12 schools) received the same overall performance rating in 2013 as in 2011; 34 (28 K-8 schools and six 9-12 schools) had a higher or improved rating; and 43 (38 K-8 schools and five 9-12 schools) experienced a decline or lower rating. Whether these trends are significant will depend, in large part, on the final iteration of the data elements being used in the Academic Performance Framework and how they are used at the school level to improve the education for students served by the School System.

Tennessee was one of the first two states to receive funds from the federal government's Race to the Top competition. Of the $501,000,000 awarded to the state, the School System received a total of $37,000,000 for the following six initiatives:

- developing exemplary teachers and leaders;
- providing effective professional development for teacher training based on the state's new academic standards and the transition to the new Common Core State Standards;
- employing data coaches to provide training of instructional staff in accessing, analyzing, and using data to inform instruction available through the system's Data Warehouse;

- enhancing the math and science curricula by establishing academies at two high schools that focus on science, technology, engineering, and math;

- providing a variety of services including implementation of whole school reform models for schools classified as underperforming by the state because they failed to meet pre-determined annual benchmarks or benchmarks continuously over time; and

- supporting efforts to improve five student performance areas and four system process areas identified through the 2009 reform initiative, the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves.

The 2014-2015 operating budget approved the following initiative:

- contracting with Teach for America for recruitment costs and ongoing professional development for 150 teachers;

- continuing the efforts of teachers to improve student achievement, share lesson plans being developed for use with Common Core, and improve efficiencies in data reporting and analysis as well as the delivery of targeted staff development and instruction at the School System's Virtual School by renewing the annual software licenses for Schoolnet and Blackboard;

- providing training for teachers necessary for the use of student-based technology, its integration into instruction, and the preparation of students for the new online assessments to be used with Common Core;

- accelerating literacy learning by developing targeted intervention programs to help students meet grade level reading benchmarks and improving literacy instruction through the use of a research-based coaching model in partnership with literacy experts; and

- establishing three Pre-K model centers and developing best practices in early childhood education through a partnership with the Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University.

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 (or the review team) identified 18 best practices against which to evaluate the educational service delivery of the School System. **Exhibit 2-13** 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 2-13
Summary of Best Practices – Educational Services Delivery

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
1.	**Academic Performance Framework:** The school system maintains a comprehensive process for determining the extent to which each system campus is providing a high-quality education for students giving specific attention to the level of student achievement as measured against accepted academic standards.	X		The School System has developed and implemented an accountability system for assessing the performance of each campus based on factors related to academic progress, college readiness, and reduction of achievement gaps between subgroups of students. **See Accomplishment 2-A.**
2.	**Transitioning to Common Core State Standards:** The school system utilizes a process for ensuring the written, taught, and tested curricula are closely linked, and what students should know and be able to do at each grade are clearly delineated.	X		Teams of content/grade level teachers have developed scope and sequence English language arts and math that incorporate the state-adopted common core standards. **See Accomplishment 2-B.**

Exhibit 2-13
Summary of Best Practices – Educational Services Delivery (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
3.	**Pre-K:** The school system offers a program of early childhood experiences designed to have a positive effect on children's short-term and long-term cognitive, social, and emotional development.	X		The School System is expanding its Pre-K program in order to provide model early childhood education programs focusing on math skills, early language and multicultural development. **See Accomplishment 2-C.**
4.	**Career Technical Education:** The Career Technical Education program offers courses in a wide range of high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand occupations/career paths through highly qualified teachers and business and university partnerships.	X		The School System offers 35 Career Technical Education programs in 18 clusters in its 46 high school academies with the extensive participation of businesses and universities. **See Accomplishment 2-D.**
5.	**All Star Training:** The school system's professional development program is designed to support teachers in improving proficiency in using technology to promote inquiry-based learning and information literacy.	X		The School System has developed and is implementing a multi-module professional development course to provide training for staff in the use of the technology needed to better prepare students for college and careers. **See Accomplishment 2-E.**
6.	**Libraries:** School libraries are appropriately staffed with certified librarians meeting or exceeding state standards.	X		Each school in the School System has a certified librarian (library information specialist) and a large percentage of libraries also have clerks enabling the librarians to spend most of their time on instructional activities. **See Accomplishment 2-F.**

Exhibit 2-13
Summary of Best Practices – Educational Services Delivery (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
7.	**Use of Data:** The data system is comprised of student, teacher, and school data that are utilized by district and school administrators, program directors, and teachers to make informed decisions and guide instruction to support and improve student performance.	X		The School System has developed a comprehensive student, teacher, and school data warehouse used to track students' progress from kindergarten to graduation. Staff use the data for decision making and guiding instruction by personalizing learning supports, setting student groupings, and being more effective in the classroom. **See Accomplishment 2-G**.
8.	**Support Services:** The program is effective in identifying student needs and providing support and services through a comprehensive set of in-school/district resources and community resources.	X		The School System's Cluster Support approach brings together specialists from different areas and aligns in-school and community services. It strengthens ties with schools and facilitates ensuring a consistently high standard of service across all schools. **See Accomplishment 2-H.**
9.	**Grants:** The grant identification, preparation, management, and monitoring system is effectively organized and staffed, has multiple monitoring and compliance checkpoints, and results in the timely use of grant funds.	X		The Office of Federal Programs and Grant Management has a comprehensive system for the identification and preparation of grants and an efficient system for grant management and monitoring to maximize the utilization of grant funds and minimize loss, due to untimely or lack of use. **See Accomplishment 2-I.**

Exhibit 2-13
Summary of Best Practices – Educational Services Delivery (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
10.	**Wellness and Fitness**: Fitness and wellness activities and programs are incorporated into the school's daily schedule involving students, staff, and families and result in improved health, better nutrition, and a reduction in obesity.	X		The School System's Coordinated Health program is integrated into the school day, promoting wellness through proper nutrition, physical education, curriculum, well trained teachers, and opportunities for parent and community involvement. **See Accomplishment 2-J.**
11.	**Academic Performance:** The school system implements policies that seek to balance the ratios of high-poverty and low-poverty students in schools.		X	The School System is not utilizing strategies in its magnet schools proved successful in other districts for increasing student achievement by reducing high concentrations of student poverty that exists in schools. **See Observation 2-A.**
12.	**Behavior Management and Discipline:** The school system fosters positive school climates that prevent problem behaviors, and use effective interventions to support struggling and at-risk students. The schools' discipline policies or code of conduct have clear, appropriate, and consistently applied expectations and consequences, helping students improve behavior and increase engagement and achievement. The schools continuously evaluate the discipline policies and practices to ensure fairness and equity.		X	Management of student behavior has resulted in a high number of disciplinary actions and in racial disparities in the use of discipline with a disproportionate number of African American students suspended, expelled, and remanded to alternative learning centers. **See Observations 2-B and 2-C**.

Exhibit 2-13
Summary of Best Practices – Educational Services Delivery (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
13.	**Gifted:** The Gifted and Talented assessment system is effective in identifying gifted students who are members of historically under-represented student populations.		X	Although the K-8 Encore program for the gifted under-identifies minority, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and special education students, it has not incorporated nonverbal and "culture fair" or "culture free" assessments proved to be effective in identifying such students. **See Observation 2-D**.
14.	**Special Education:** The pre-referral process minimizes the number of referrals that do not qualify for special education services.		X	The support team process the School System uses to address students' academic, behavioral, social-emotional or health issues has resulted in a high percentage of referrals that do not qualify for special education services. **See Observation 2-E.**
15.	**Guidance and Counseling**. The program adheres to national standards with regard to tasks, and activities counselors perform in the provision of direct and indirect services.		X	The amount of time counselors are assigned to perform non-counseling duties is a barrier to providing high quality interventions for students. **See Observation 2-F.**
16.	**Student Health Services:** The Program provides the full range of nursing services to all schools.		X	The School System offers a minimal health services program due to its nurse staffing levels, leaving a large number of schools without appropriate access to services provided by a school nurse. **See Observation 2-G.**

Exhibit 2-13
Summary of Best Practices – Educational Services Delivery (Cont'd)

Best Practice Number	Description of Best Practice	Met	Not Met	Explanation
17.	**English Language Learners**: The program has the organizational and support structure, qualified staff, resources, challenging curriculum, and effective instructional strategies to prepare English language learners to become proficient in English, and meet grade level academic goals.		X	While the English Language Learners program has changed its structure, curriculum, staffing allocation guidelines, professional development, and monitoring strategies in accordance with the 2010 evaluation recommendations, students' rates of English proficiency, program completion, and performance on state tests have not improved and it has not met the Tennessee English Language Program Accountability Standards in 2012-2013. **See Observation 2-H.**
18.	**Libraries:** School libraries' collections meet or exceed state standards.		X	Three-quarters of the School System's high school libraries do not meet Tennessee's minimum requirement for public school library collection of 12 items per student in average daily membership. **See Observation 2-I.**

Source: McConnell Jones Lanier & Murphy LLP Review Team.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-A

The School System has developed a set of accountability metrics for use in assessing school performance.

In collaboration with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers and through grants provided by a number of organizations, the School System developed the "Academic Performance Framework "to ensure that each and every school is serving students with a high-quality public education." Initially designed for use with charter schools, it has been expanded for use with all schools in the School System. It is currently being used to allocate Title I funds to support Reading Recovery, Reading Interventionists, and participation in the Literacy Partnership with Lipscomb University. The APF is also used to pair schools into network and to determine employment of principals.

The Academic Performance Framework uses the following four measures:

- academic performance;

- attainment and college readiness;

- achievement gap; and

- school culture.

Each of the four measures or indicators receives one of five ratings--excelling, achieving, satisfactory, review, and target—and is weighted to provide an overall 'academic performance' rating for the school. For example, the first indicator, *academic progress* which reflects academic growth or improvement over time composes 50 percent of the cumulative rating and is measured in two ways. For Grades K-8, the measures are the average one-year Normal Curve Equivalent gain on the Tennessee Value Added Assessment System and the average one-year increase in the achievement level for reading, math, and science on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program. For Grades 9-12, the one-year scale score gain and the one-year increase in mean achievement level on End-of-Course Algebra I and II, English I, II, and III, and Biology I are used.

For *attainment and college readiness*, the second indicator, the measures for Grade K-8 schools are the percent of students scoring 'proficient' or 'advanced' for reading, math, and science on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program and the percent of students in the school's highest grade projected to score 21 or above on the ACT college entrance exam composite by the end of high school. The measures for Grades 9-12 include the percent of students scoring 'proficient' or 'advanced' for Algebra I and II, English I, II, and III, and Biology I on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program; the percent of students scoring 21 or above on the ACT or 980 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test; and the percent of seniors graduating on time with a regular high school diploma.

The third indicator, *achievement gap*, reflects the difference in achievement between subgroups of students that are traditionally disadvantaged and their traditionally non-disadvantaged peers. It is measured at Grades K-8 with an index based on the differences between student subgroups determined by race, economic status, disability, and English proficiency in reading, math, and science proficiencies

on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program. At Grades 9-12, the achievement gap is measured by an index based on the differences between the same student subgroups on End-of-Course exams in Algebra I and II, English I, II, and III, and Biology I.

School culture is defined as the "norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and expectations that direct school activities" as determined through surveys of educators and students with parents to be added in the future. The measures at Grades K-8 and 9-12 are the same including the mean response indicating agreement with positive culture statements on the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning Tennessee Survey;[1] the mean composite response from a parent survey; and the mean composite response from students on the Tripod Project student perceptions survey.

Pre-established criteria for categorizing performance on individual measures have been established. **Exhibit 2-14** provides the score ranges of the individual measures and the composite number of points corresponding to the five performance categories.

Exhibit 2-14
Score Ranges and Reporting
Academic Performance Framework

Individual Measures	Target	Review	Satisfactory	Achieving	Excelling
Achv Level Inc. Percent of Goal	<5%	5 - 29.9%	30 – 59.9%	60 – 74.9%	75% or greater
K-8 TVAAS NCE gain	<-2.0	-2.0 - 0.99	1.0 – 4.99	5.0 – 7.49	7.5 or greater
HS TVAAS SS gain	<-5.0	-5.0 - -1.01	-1.0 – 3.99	4.0 – 7.99	8 or greater
Percent Proficient/Advanced	<20%	20 – 29.9%	30 – 59.9%	60 – 74.9%	75 – 100%
Achievement Gap	>20%	12.1% - 20%	4.1 – 12%	0.1 – 4%	0% or less
TELL TN Survey results	<60%	60 -69.9%	70 -79.9%	80 – 89.9%	90 – 100%
Tripod Survey results	<25%	25 – 39.9%	40 – 54.9%	55 – 64.9%	65 – 100%
K-8 ACT projections	0 - 4.9%	5 – 9.9%	10 – 39.9%	40 – 59.9%	60 – 100%
HS ACT 21+	0 - 9.9%	10 – 19.9%	20 -49.9%	50 – 69.9%	70 – 100%
Graduation rate	<65%	65 – 69.9%	70 – 79.9%	80 – 89.9%	90 – 100%
Composite (Total Points)	**0-19.99**	**20-27.99**	**28-54.99**	**55-64.99**	**65-100**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Performance Framework.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-B

The School System has developed scope and sequence documents for every Tennessee State Standard in mathematics and English language arts at every grade level in the system and has developed an online system for providing the professional growth necessary for internalizing the standards and their application.

The Common Core State Standards is a set of academic standards, or learning goals, in math and reading that outlines what students should know and be able to do throughout their K-12 education on a grade-by-grade basis. Having origins in the standards-based reform efforts of the 1996 National Education

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[1] The survey was initiated by the Tennessee State Department of Education and a coalition of education stakeholders working collaboratively with the New Teacher Center to assess whether educators across the state report having the resources and support necessary to encourage the most effective teaching.

Summit, the current standards were initiated through efforts led by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. In 2008, those organizations issued a report advocating adoption, nationwide, of a set of common standards designed to prepare students for success in college or in an entry-level career upon graduation from high school. Tennessee's State Board of Education adopted the standards in 2010. Currently, more than 40 states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity have adopted the Common Core and are preparing for its implementation.

In the School System, all scope and sequences have been developed by teams of content or grade level teachers and are available on the district's 'school net.' While there are slight differences in format between the two subjects, within the content area the scope and sequence documents are format-alike. In English language arts, for example, the format used to provide teachers with a roadmap for ensuring that students acquire the skills to become proficient on each standard is the same regardless of the grade level. The instructional framework for the Common Core standards in English language arts include the following activities:

- reading complex texts;

- writing about texts;

- completing a research project; and

- refunding specific activities embedded throughout each unit including:

  – analyzing content;
  – studying and applying grammar;
  – studying and applying vocabulary;
  – reporting findings;
  – citing evidence; and
  – conducting discussions.

Between February and July 2014, 4,700 teachers participated in *All-Star Training*, an eight module professional development course that includes modules on implementing Common Core in the School System and developing unit plans in English language arts and math that will be available online to all system teachers for use during 2014-2015. Seven hundred new teachers were enrolled in the training beginning July 1.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-C

The School System is expanding the capacity of its Pre-K program in 2014-2015 from 2,516 to 2,838 students by repurposing two PreK-4 campuses to Model Pre-K Learning Centers and adding capacity through a partnership with an existing community center that will focus on early math skills, language development, multicultural development, and intense staff development programming.

In 2013-2014, the School System operated two types of Pre-K programs, general education classes and blended classes, both of which can be funded locally, by state funds, or by Title I funds. Locally funded programs are located in 18 elementary schools, state funded programs in 37 schools, and Title I programs in three schools. Three schools operated both locally and state funded programs, and one

school has both state and Title I funded programs. The School System also operates Pre-K classes in five community centers. General classes are designated for children without disabilities and blended classes for children with special education Individualized Education Plans as well as those without. Blended classes are fee-based for students without an Individualized Education Plan.

Beginning in 2014-2015, Ross and Bordeaux Elementary Schools will be converted from PreK-4 schools to Model Pre-K Centers. Programs at those schools and the Casa Azafran Community Center will be staffed with teachers and assistant teachers in every classroom with knowledge of early childhood development. The directors of the three programs have been selected and, with their teachers, will work with the Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University to develop the model program.

Research is clear concerning the value of high quality early learning experiences for young children. The Pew Center on the States, in its 2011 report *Transforming Public Education: Pathway to a Pre-K-12 Future,* states that "we know from more than 50 years of research that vital learning happens before five" and that starting school in kindergarten or first grade deprives children of the opportunity to profit from early learning, and that relying on children playing catch-up does not provide a long-term strategy for success. Rather, the vast body of evidence from research indicates that high-quality Pre-K is an essential catalyst for raising school performance. Eric Dearing, in a 2009 issue of *Child Development 80* (as reported in the 2011 Pew report), reported that participation in high-quality early education programs not only improves early literacy and math skills but is also associated with later academic performance in the primary years and beyond. The College Board is so convinced that children having the opportunity for the early development of strong literacy and language skills are more likely to graduate from high school on time that it lists Pre-K for all three and four year olds as the first of ten recommendations for increasing college enrollment.

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation – MDRC has taken a similar position in supporting the long-term benefits of Pre-K. In *Delivering on the Promise of Preschool (2013)*, "If left unaddressed, gaps in school achievement in preschool and kindergarten (between low income children and their more affluent peers) don't close and may widen over the ensuing elementary years." Research reported by the Society for Research in Child Development indicates that "a recent analysis integrating evaluations of 84 preschool programs concluded that, on average, children gain about a third of a year of additional learning across language, reading, and math skills" and that systems in Tulsa and Boston "produced larger gains of between a half and a full year of additional learning in reading and math."

There are cautions, however, in the development of Pre-K programs. The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation – MDRC reports that as many as 20 percent of preschool-enrolled children have high levels of behavioral problems requiring the appropriate training and guidance in managing these issues. The Pew Center's research suggests that focusing solely on reading and math skills will not produce the desired results but must give attention to all the important skills: cognitive, social, and emotional. The School System is to be commended for developing a program designed to meet all the needs of its Pre-K students.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-D

The School System has an exemplary Career Technical Education program offering 35 programs in 18 clusters through 46 high school academies, with wide business buy-in and participation, partnerships with universities, and vocational student associations.

The Career Technical Education program serves students in grades 10 to 12. In 2013-2014, 11,788 students, 55.9 percent of the students in grades 10-12, are participating in the program. In grade 9, students take a Freshman Seminar that includes career interest surveys and exposure to different careers and the associated courses that are available. Ninth grade students attend a career fair in October where they interview exhibitors, perform hands-on activities, and visit the varied career academies. At the end of the 9th grade, they choose an academy. The academies were established based on students' interests, the Nashville job market, and school building resources with the goal of preparing students for high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand jobs. Each high school, exclusive of the Virtual School, has two to five academies shown in **Exhibit 2-15**. The 46 academies are organized into the following five broad areas:

- Arts, Media and Communications offered in eight high schools;

- Business, Marketing, and Information Technology offered in 10 high schools;

- Engineering, Manufacturing and Industrial Technology offered in nine high schools;

- Health and Public Service offered in 15 high schools; and

- Hospitality and Tourism offered in four high schools.

Exhibit 2-15
High School Academies

High School	Arts, Media & Communications	Business, Marketing & Information Technology	Engineering, Manufacturing & Industrial Technology	Health & Public Service	Hospitality & Tourism
Antioch		The Tennessee Credit Union Academy of Business & Finance	Academy of Automotive Technology	Academy of Teaching & Services	Academy of Hospitality
Cane Ridge	Academy of Arts & Communication		Academy of Architecture & Construction	Academy of Health Management Academy of Law	
Glencliff		The Ford Academy of Business & Innovation	Academy of Environmental & Urban Planning	Academy of Medical Science & Research	
Hillsboro	Academy of International Business & Communications	Academy of International Business & Communication		Academy of Global Health & Science Academy of International Baccalaureate	
Hillwood	Academy of Art, Design, & Communication			Academy of Health Sciences	Academy of Business & Hospitality
Hunters Lane	Academy of Design & Technology	Academy of Design & Technology Academy of Marketing & Business		Academy of Health & Human Services Academy of International Baccalaureate	Academy of Hospitality
Maplewood		Academy of Business & Consumer Services	Academy of Energy & Power Academy of Business & consumer Services	Academy of Sports Medicine & Wellness	
McGavock	CMT Academy of Design & Communications	US Community Union Academy of Business Credit & Finance	Academy of Aviation & Transportation	Academy of Health Science & Law	Gaylord Entertainment Academy of Hospitality
Overton	Academy of Musical Performance	Academy of Information Technology		Academy of Health Sciences	
Pearl-Cohn Entertainment Magnet	Academy of Entertainment Communication Academy of Entertainment Management				

Exhibit 2-15
High School Academies (Cont'd)

High School	Arts, Media & Communications	Business, Marketing & Information Technology	Engineering, Manufacturing & Industrial Technology	Health & Public Service	Hospitality & Tourism
Stratford STEM Magnet		Academy of National Safety and Security Technologies	Academy of Science & Engineering	Academy of National Safety & Security Technologies	
The Virtual School		Academy of Business & Marketing			
Whites Creek			Academy of Alternative Energy, Sustainability, & Logistics	Academy of Community Heath Academy of Education & Law	

Source: The Academies of Nashville, July 1, 2013.

The Career Technical Education program has 116 certified teachers. According to the program coordinators, half of the teachers have an industry background and receive a Tennessee apprentice/occupational license for three years, during which time they complete all education and teaching requirements. New teachers are assigned a coach and a lead teacher as a mentor. The program also created a New Career Technical Education Teacher Academy in the fall of 2012 to help new teachers, especially those coming from industry, gain the knowledge and skills necessary to begin their teaching career. The program is an 18-month process where instructional coaches meet with the new teachers on a "just in time" plan—teaching them instructional strategies, instructional planning, classroom management and classroom assessment while they are with their students. Each teacher has an individualized professional development plan in order to keep current with their industry.

The career academies have extensive business participation and support. The highest level of business participation involves senior executives who recommend people from their companies, or their colleagues, to serve on one of five Partnership Councils to advise on structure, curriculum, and experiences for all the Academies. Since their establishment in 2005, the number of business partnerships has increased 55 percent with partner retention at 90 percent. Each academy has an advisory board/partnership council that ensures the academy's curricula meets industry standards, provides work-based learning opportunities for faculty and students, and identifies additional academy needs. According to the 2012-2013 Academies of Nashville Annual Report, that year the academies had 249 active business partners contributing 31,435 volunteer hours, equaling a one-year investment in excess of $2,200,000. The business partners visit the schools, speak to students, invite students to visit their businesses, and participate in the annual program evaluations.

The Career Technical Education program also partners with local universities, including Nashville State Community College, Volunteer State Community College, Tennessee Technological University, Tennessee College of Applied Technology, and Middle Tennessee State University. Students can take dual credit courses in areas such as agriculture, arts and communication, automotive technology, aviation, business, construction, cosmetology, criminal justice, culinary arts, engineering, family consumer sciences, health science, marketing, and information technology.

Students participate in a variety of Career Technology Education student associations such as the National Scholastic Press Association, Student Television Network, Distributive Education Clubs of America, Future Business Leaders of America, Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Skills USA, Future Teachers of America, Health Occupations Students of America, Technology Student Association, and Mock Trial.

An additional positive by-product of initiating the career academies concept is the improvement in the graduation rate in the School System. Between 2007-08 and 2011-2012, the graduation rate improved by 3.2 to 27.2 percent in individual high schools and by 20.9 percent overall compared to an increase statewide of 6.2 percent.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-E

The School System is training its full-time certified staff in the use of student-focused technology necessitated by the creation of new online learning environments to better prepare students for college and careers.

The School System has developed *All-Star Training*, an eight-module professional development course, to train its full-time certified teachers, principals, and assistant principals, on using the new technology, integrating it into instruction, and preparing students for the new online assessments developed through the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers for the Common Core standards. The Tennessee state legislature voted in April 2014 to delay statewide implementation of the new assessments for one year. The current state assessment instrument, the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program, will continue to be used during 2014-2015.

All-Star Training is designed to provide information through a variety of approaches about the School System's Education 2018, the system's strategic plan, and the resources and technology available for meeting the plan's goals as well as other major initiatives and a more fully shared understanding, systemwide, of the Common Core standards and the new assessments. The eight modules are available to all staff through Blackboard, a technology application that allows staff to integrate resources from multiple content formats such as PowerPoint, video, audio, or animation into courses or units as a means of enhancing learning by allowing students to review information based on their preferred learning styles and schedules. With the exception of counselors who will complete a modified version, and Pre-K teachers, all full-time certified staff returning in 2014-2015 are expected to complete the modules no later than July 31, 2015. The eight modules included in the training are as follows:

- Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Education 2018;
- Technology Essentials;
- Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Learning Platform;
- Implementing Common Core within the School System;
- Blended Learning Environments;
- Online Assessment Readiness;
- Response to Instruction and Interventions; and
- Unit Planning.

The School System's staff can complete the modules and associated assessments through either the online or blended models, or through guided support at Martin Professional Development Center. In the online model, all modules and assessments are self-paced and are completed online. The blended model combines module completion online with support sessions facilitated by school-based trainers. The support sessions can meet during planning periods, faculty meetings, time scheduled outside school hours, or any other option coordinated through the building principal.

Training at Martin Professional Development Center is being offered in a variety of formats that includes face-to-face and online approaches. On Monday-Thursday from March 3 through July 31, guided instruction is being provided in all day sessions, twice a week, on each of two groupings of modules, 1-4 and 5-7. On Fridays, guided support is provided in all day sessions for Module 8. 'Drop-in' sessions covering Modules 1-7 are also available on the first and third Saturdays of every month. Documentation for completion of all modules regardless of the training option must be completed in Blackboard.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-F

The School System's library program is well staffed with full-time certified librarians supported by clerks, allowing the librarians to engage in instruction-related activities that enhance students' academic achievement.

Research studies clearly and consistently demonstrate the positive and statistically significant relationship between having adequate library staffing and improved student achievement. The role of librarians is especially critical to student performance. Schools with well-staffed libraries where endorsed librarians also have clerks show consistently higher performance levels. The presence of library clerks and the number of hours they work are critical to librarians' ability to perform the range of high priority activities. Library clerks "free" the librarian from having to perform basic library activities and allow the librarian to allocate time to activities that are more directly related to teaching and training staff and students, such as collaboratively planning and teaching with teachers, providing staff development to teachers, facilitating information skills instruction, managing technology, communicating with school administrators, and providing reading incentive activities. These activities lead to incremental gains in student learning and performance.

The School System's library services organization consists of a lead librarian with three support staff, 130 full-time endorsed library information specialists, and 81.5 full-time equivalent library clerks. The support staff members work with the libraries: One is responsible for professional development and two are technology specialists.

The Tennessee Board of Education minimum requirements for public school library personnel are listed in **Exhibit 2-16**. Each of the School System's libraries has one or more full-time librarians with the appropriate endorsement. At the elementary and middle school levels the School System exceeds the standard for schools with 549 or fewer students. It meets the standard for schools with 550 or more students. At the high school level it meets the standards for all schools.

Exhibit 2-16
Tennessee Public School Library Staffing Standards and
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Library Staffing

Staff – Average Daily Membership	Staffing Standard	Number of Libraries	Number of Librarians	Meet/Exceed Standard
Elementary				
399 or Fewer Students	Library Information Coordinator	31	31	Exceed
400 to 549 Students	0.5 Librarian	21	21	Exceed
550 or More Students	Full-Time Librarian	21	21	Meet
Middle School				
399 or Fewer Students	Library Information Coordinator	8	8	Exceed
400 to 549 Students	0.5 Librarian	10	10	Exceed
550 or More Students	1.0 Full-Time Librarian	18	18	Meet
High School				
299 or Fewer Students	0.5 Librarian	-	-	-
300 to 1,499 Students	1 Full-Time Librarian	11	11	Meet
1,500 or More Students	2 Full-Time Librarians	5	10	Meet

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Learning Technology and Library Services, February 2014.

In addition to full-time librarians, the School System has 81.5 full-time equivalent library clerks as shown in **Exhibit 2-17**. In libraries that do not have clerks, librarians recruit and train volunteers and students to help them with clerical tasks and train students in self-checkout.

Exhibit 2-17
Number of Library Information Specialists and Aides
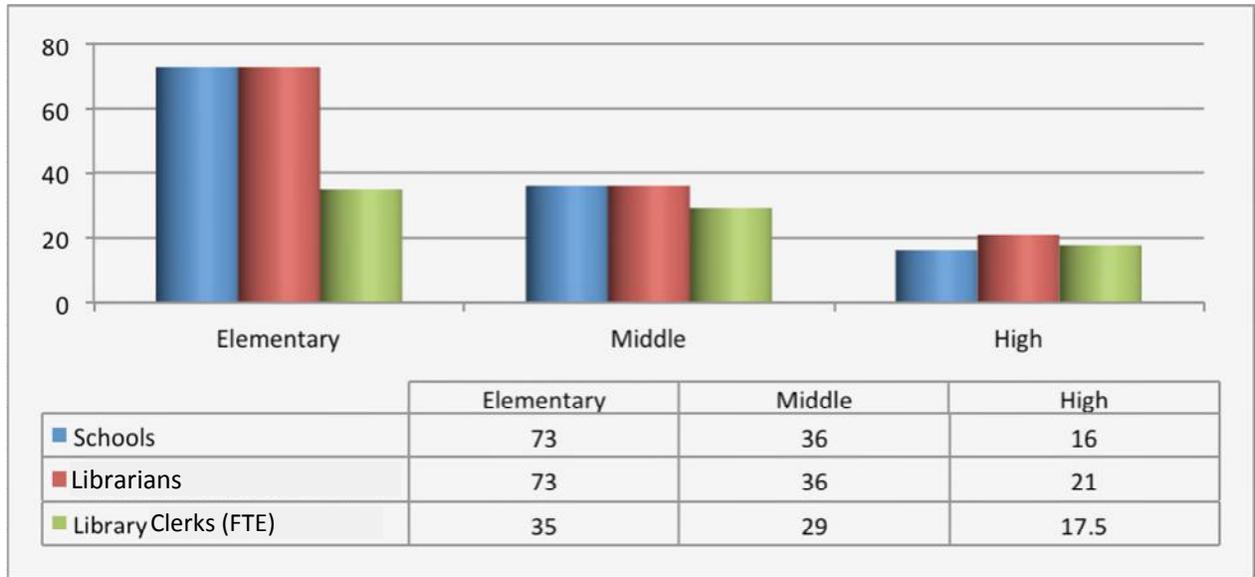
	Elementary	Middle	High
■ Schools	73	36	16
■ Librarians	73	36	21
■ Library Clerks (FTE)	35	29	17.5

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Learning Technology and Library Services, February 2014.

The School System's librarians follow the "librarian as teacher" model. Librarians with a full-time aide estimate they spend 85 to 90 percent of their time on instructional activities. Librarians who have no aide or who have a part-time aide estimate that between 50 and 70 percent of their time is spent on instructional activities. Library information specialists engage in the following instructional activities:

- direct instruction in the classroom or via video shown in multiple classrooms on research skills;

- working with individual or small groups of students on research projects during independent study;

- helping students create multi-media projects using technology, such as movies, Podcasts, and electronic presentations;

- co-planning lessons and projects with teachers;

- teaching grade-specific library skills to elementary school students; and

- working at the elementary level with low-literacy students, teaching them library, literacy, and research skills.

The librarians publicize their role and how they can assist teachers and students in a newsletter. The lead librarian also works with principals, informing them of the role of librarians and how they can contribute to student academic achievement.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-G

The School System has built a comprehensive data warehouse and implemented an effective system for using data to analyze student performance and guide instruction.

The School System initiated the Longitudinal Education Analysis and Decision Support data warehouse in 2009 and launched it in January 2010 in response to schools not meeting the benchmarks set by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. The Longitudinal Education Analysis and Decision Support data warehouse provides statistical information on the "whole child"— tracking student progress from kindergarten to high school completion and beyond, including data on course grades, Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program scores, attendance, truancy, school activities, after-school activities, health status, and school changes. It gives teachers and principals a better understanding of each student's progress, academic achievement, discipline, and attendance. The system allows teachers and administrators to log onto the database on their computers, and access a "dashboard." Teachers have access to the student data in real time and can identify any warning signs, using the early warning indicator system. Teachers can correlate various factors with student achievement, identify trends over time for an individual student, assess if the student is on track to succeed, and identify strengths and opportunities for improvement. Using these data, teachers can personalize learning supports, set student groupings, and be more effective in the classroom. The School System plans to add data on post-secondary education and employment, central office operations, district financing, and teachers' licensure and certification.

The School System has 12 data coaches who train instructional coaches, teachers and principals across all campuses on the Academic Performance Framework; how to access the data in the data warehouse; and how to disaggregate, understand, and use the data. The data coaches are funded through the Race to the Top grant. Each school has a data room where teachers identify and track students in need of assistance and coordinate instructional activities with other teachers and with instructional coaches.

In addition to teachers and school administrators, the Longitudinal Education Analysis and Decision Support data warehouse is also useful for the school board, administration, student support services, students and parents, and community partners. The data can be used for accountability, performance management, monitoring year-to-year improvement, resource allocation, professional development planning, operational planning and operations, teacher effectiveness monitoring and support, and intervention services as presented on **Exhibit 2-18**.

Exhibit 2-18
Data Warehouse Data Use and Reports

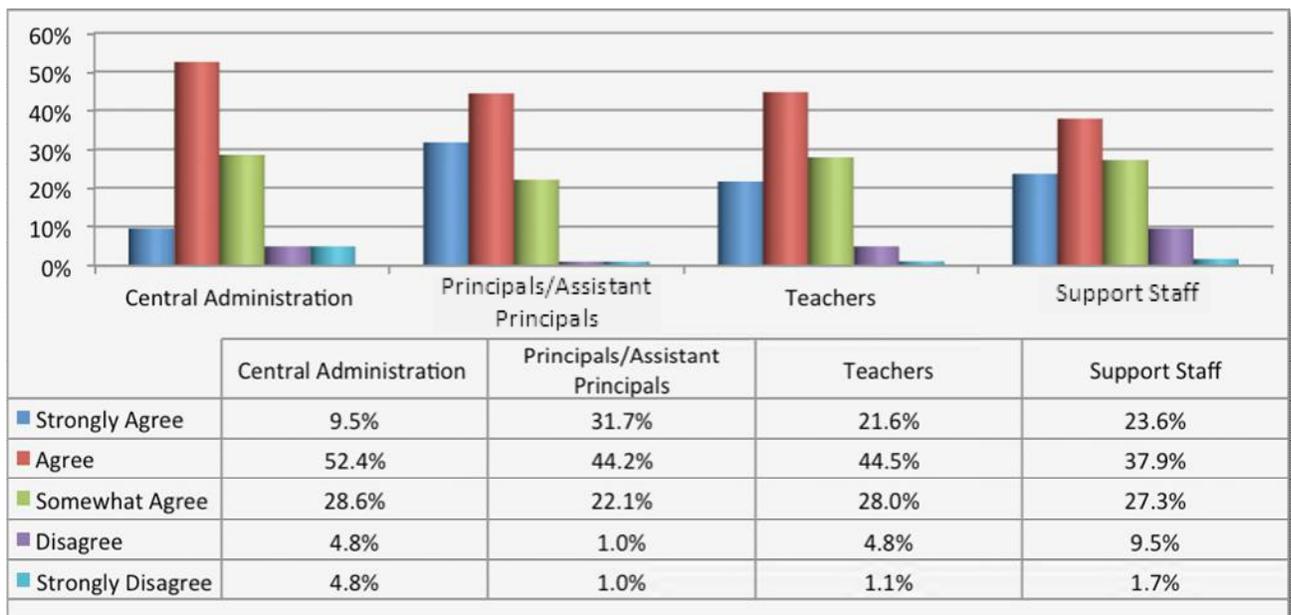| Users	Purpose of Data	Reports
School Board	Accountability Performance Management Monitoring Year to Year Improvement Resource Allocation	School Board Dashboard
Administration	Performance Measurement/Management Resource Allocation Strategic Planning Professional Development Planning Operational Planning and Operations	District Dashboard by Cluster Cluster Dashboard
Student Support Services	Intervention Services Social work and psychology Students with Disabilities English Language Learners Homeless At risk Identification Coaching Services for Teachers	Students with Disabilities Assessment Composite
School Leadership	Beginning of the Year Planning School Improvement Planning School Level Performance Trends Root Cause issue Identification Teacher Effectiveness Monitoring and Support Resource Allocation Culture and Climate Feedback	School Dashboard School Grades/Achievement Comparison

School Staff	Student and Teacher Need Identification and
	  Trend Analysis
	Performance measurement
	Individual Student and Teacher Personalized
	  Support
		Program profile
		
		Marking Period Failure Summary

Classroom Teachers	Classroom Performance Trends Assessment Analysis Personalized Learning Supports Student Grouping Culture and Climate Feedback	Test Results Summary for a Specific Teacher Individual Student Profile and Test Results Summary
Students and Parents	Trends Over Time for an Individual Student Holistic Look at Individual Student Status of Student to be on Track to Succeed Identification of Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement	Student Record and Student Profile Dashboard
Community Partners	Resource Allocation and Program Placement Program Impact Assessment Targeted Instruction Intervention/Enrichment	By School, Students' Profile, Performance over Three Years

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Information Management and Decision Support, Leveraging Data for Action, Improvement, and Accountability, April 5, 2014.

Members of the review team conducted nine focus groups with teachers in three elementary, three middle, and two high schools, including two charter schools. Each of the schools has a data room displaying performance data by teacher/classroom and individual student. At all levels teachers meet with data coaches and instructional or reading specialists to review student performance data and identify where students are struggling or are deficient. Teachers use these data for ability or skill-level

groupings in the elementary and middle school levels, and identify areas that they need to teach or re-teach. Elementary school teachers also discuss with lower grade teachers gaps in students' knowledge. At the high school level teachers review individual students' attendance and discipline data and communicate across departments to coordinate instructional services. At all school levels, teachers and coaches communicate performance data to students. For example, teachers and the data coach have data chats with students in 3rd and 4th grades, show them their scores, indicate where they need to improve, and ask students for suggestions on how they can improve. At the middle school level, students have a folder with their own data, have ownership over their performance, and can monitor it. Similarly, at the high school level, teachers make students aware of their academic status based on the data disaggregation and make them take responsibility for it.

The survey the review team conducted of central administration staff, principals and assistant principals, teachers, and support staff confirmed the use of data by teachers to make informed decisions as shown in **Exhibit 2-19**. A majority of each group agreed or strongly agreed that teachers routinely use data to make informed decisions.

Exhibit 2-19
Survey of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools – In General Teachers at my Level
Use Data to Make Informed Decisions

	Central Administration	Principals/Assistant Principals	Teachers	Support Staff
Strongly Agree	9.5%	31.7%	21.6%	23.6%
Agree	52.4%	44.2%	44.5%	37.9%
Somewhat Agree	28.6%	22.1%	28.0%	27.3%
Disagree	4.8%	1.0%	4.8%	9.5%
Strongly Disagree	4.8%	1.0%	1.1%	1.7%

Source: Survey of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, April-May 2014.
Percentages were recalculated excluding respondents who checked "not applicable."

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-H

Using a Cluster Support model, the School System identifies unmet needs of students and their families and provides wrap-around services through community partnerships to improve attendance, prevent drop out, and increase graduation.

In addition to implementing an array of support programs such as Before and After School, Safe and Drug Free Schools, Homeless Education for Families in Transition, and First Offenders program, the School System developed a Cluster Support approach that brings together teams of specialists from different areas and aligns in-school and community services to provide a comprehensive set of services, prevent duplication of services, and reach more students. This approach strengthens ties with schools and facilitates a consistent high standard of service, where previously commitment to support services and quality of implementation varied across schools. The Cluster Support core team is composed of three to four social workers, a family involvement specialist, a Family and Youth Service assistant who is a truancy officer, and a Cluster Support clerk. Each Cluster Support team is located in one of the schools in the respective cluster, and serves a feeder pattern of schools. Additional staff may join the core team depending on student needs. The staff may include school counselors, Family Engagement specialists, translators and other staff from the Office of English Language Learners, behavior specialists, and the coordinator of Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities. School staff contact the Cluster Support team if they determine that a student, or his/her family, needs access to resources not available in the school. The Cluster Support team meets weekly to review school trend data, discuss students at risk or in need of services, and identify appropriate services for those students. The team reviews the request and assigns it to a social worker or a Family and Youth Service assistant for further assessment. Schools also hold monthly Support and Intervention meetings which include the principal; the school's leadership team; and, as appropriate, other school staff such as a counselor, school nurse, school psychologist, academic coaches, and members of the Cluster Support team. The Support and Intervention meetings, led by the principal, discuss specific interventions, services and programs for respective students who are at risk based on their attendance, grades, or disciplinary problems.

To access and use community resources, the Office of Support Services established, in 2013-2014, the Community Achieves program. The program functions in 19 schools and focuses strategically on the combined efforts of the school and its community partners as they impact college and career readiness, health and wellness, social services and parental engagement. Having a set of expected outcomes associated with specific programs and initiatives, the Community Achieves program conducts an inventory of resources in each school, showing what is currently in place, where the gaps are, and which community partners can address these gaps. Based on its inventory of resources in each school, it identifies appropriate strategies and resources for the school and develops a work plan that the school will implement to achieve outcomes such as parent involvement.

The School System involves and supports parents through a myriad of programs and activities such as the following:

- a Parent University that offers one- or two-hour sessions for parents;

- family suppers where participants are asked for input on academic, behavior, and support issues and mobilize the community to take care of their own issues;

- an Educate the Community radio program targeted at Latino families;

- a monthly newsletter in English, Spanish, Kurdish, and Arabic that is distributed to 179 religious organizations;

- an Urban Family Engagement Network that provides a 12-session training program for parents, implemented by cluster, about their school, the school board, and the political process and encourages them to become involved;

- a Family Academic Success Team pilot grant that teaches parents how to help support their children academically; and

- a poverty simulation for teachers.

Metropolitan Schools has also implemented a system of support for middle and high school students that have been identified through the Dashboard At-risk Screening, as at-risk of dropping out. The Cluster Support team invites students identified as having academic, attendance, or discipline problems to attend the screenings which are held every two months. The screening has several stations staffed by members of the Cluster Support team. The students meet with different staff based on their needs. If they have an academic problem, they may meet with the counselor who reviews their credits, grades, and creates an academic improvement plan for them. They may also meet with a social worker who will address barriers to academic success, and the Family Involvement specialist who will connect them to after school services. The Cluster Support team will meet after the screenings to review the information gathered from the student interviews and make recommendations about services. The team will enter the information into the Data Warehouse Support and Intervention section of the student profile which will be shared with the principal for academic follow-up, and with community partners who will identify which intervention activities are showing the best impact.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-I

The School System has developed an effective system to assist with and monitor grants compliance for the more than $151,000,000 in state, federal, and foundation grants during 2013-2014. The School System uses a team of school improvement program facilitators that helps schools develop school improvement plans, ensure compliance with federal and state policies, assist schools with budgeting of grant funds, and evaluate allocation of resources.

The Office of Federal Programs and Grant Management has a comprehensive system for the identification of grant opportunities, assessing the ability to meet the grant requirements, evaluating the alignment of the grant with the strategic plan, and preparing grant applications. Once a grant opportunity is approved, the office assembles a grant development team that prepares the application. The office conducts professional development on grant writing and grant development and management. It offers a quarterly grant colloquium; publishes a monthly Grant Grapevine Newsletter that highlights grant opportunities and sends it to all schools; offers grant preparation workshops to administrators, staff and teachers; and encourages schools to apply for grants by having school-based grant development teams.

The office also has an efficient system for grant management and for monitoring the use of funds. Their goal is to maximize the utilization of grant funds and minimize loss due to untimely or lack of use. When the School System secures a grant, it assigns it to a business unit for monitoring by a fiscal team composed of a contracts specialist, grant manager, and fiscal manager. The process for monitoring the use of grant funds involves several approval layers and checks. The fiscal team reviews all fund requisitions before they are processed. The Office works with school improvement program facilitators

and school bookkeepers. Three of the eight school improvement specialists are assigned to elementary schools, two are assigned to middle schools, two are assigned to high schools, and one is assigned to iZone and charter schools, each overseeing 22 schools on average. The school improvement facilitators assist schools in the development of their school improvement plans, work with the school improvement teams, monitor implementation of the school improvement plan, ensure compliance with federal and state policies, assist with budgeting, analyze and maintain school level data, and evaluate resource allocation. The Office of Federal Programs and Grant Management trains and works with the school bookkeepers to build the schools' budget capacity, ensure compliance with state and federal regulations associated with the grant, and monitor fund use.

The Office also partners with other departments. It collaborates with the Office of Leadership and Learning to ensure that the grants the School System seek are aligned with the strategic plan and vision. It works with Business Services to ensure compliance with federal policies and procedures. The Research Assessment and Evaluation Office assists with the development of performance measures for the grants and with their evaluation.

The Office of Federal Programs and Grant Management provides training and technical assistance to all staff working with federal and state funds. The technical assistance consists of researching laws and regulations and preparing budgets, budget amendments, and fiscal reports.

ACCOMPLISHMENT 2-J

The School System has implemented a comprehensive health and wellness program – the Coordinated School Health program – and institutionalized it at the school and district level by collaborating and coordinating with all departments in the School System, aligning program goals with systemwide student success initiatives, and partnering with community organizations, universities, and hospitals.

With the goal of creating a healthy school environment and promoting students' knowledge and skills to make informed decisions regarding their health and well-being, the School System's Coordinated School Health program promotes student wellness through proper nutrition, physical education practices, curriculum, well trained teachers, and opportunities for parent and community involvement. The School System implemented the Coordinated School Health program consisting of health education; health services; physical education; nutrition services; counseling, psychological and social services; a healthy and safe school environment; and health promotion to staff and family community involvement. It is also focusing on Dr. Basch's seven educationally-relevant health disparities that include breakfast, physical activity, asthma, vision, teen pregnancy, aggression and violence, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. As part of this initiative, both staff and students have participated in a wide range of physical and wellness activities:

- In 2012-2013, 1,070 faculty and staff members participated in wellness programs and spent 143.4 hours of staff development time addressing health-related topics.

- Since 2010-2011, 318 faculty members were certified in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillators (AED).

- Between 2009-2010 and January 2014, the School System increased the number of participating campuses, the number of students served, and the rate of student participation in physical fitness activities and health screenings as presented in **Exhibit 2-20**. The prevalence of overweightness and obesity rate in students has been reduced from 39.9 percent in 2007-08 when the Coordinated School Heath program started to 36.1 percent in 2012-2013.

Exhibit 2-20
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Students Receiving Services
from the Coordinated School Health Program
2009-2010 to 2013-2014

School Year	Number of Students Served	Number of Campuses	Number of Students Participating			
			Mile Run / PACER	Height/ Weight/ Body Mass (BMI) Index	Blood Pressure	Vision and Hearing
2009-2010	40,206	72	9,419	14,900	6,420	17,202
2010-2011	60,893	105	10,444	21,499	5,880	27,084
2011-2012	75,876	All**	15,950	28,842	6,723	28,901
2012-2013	76,563	All**	16,963	29,968	5,759	29,082
2013-2014*	77,940	All**	8,218	16,983	2,292	18,736

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Office of Coordinated School Health, February 2014.
*2013-2014 data is up to January 31, 2014.
** Excluding charter schools and some specialty schools.

The Coordinated School Health program has established partnerships with several universities and hospitals including Lipscomb University, Belmont University, Tennessee State University, Aquinas College, Nashville State Community College, the Vanderbilt Medical Center, and Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. It is also working with local agencies such as the Nashville Fire Department and the Metropolitan Nashville Public Health Department and such health foundations as the American Heart Association and Cumberland Pediatric Foundation. Partnerships have also been established with the YMCA of Middle Tennessee, United Way of Metropolitan Nashville, Community Food Advocates, Southeast United Dairy Industry Association, the Governor's Council, Alignment Nashville, and the Tennessee Titans.

The program is integrated into the school day to educate students, teachers, and parents about the importance of fitness and nutrition, and uses the large volume of health and wellness data it collects to help schools set specific goals and make informed decisions regarding the health, fitness, and nutrition areas on which to focus. **Exhibit 2-21** shows examples of programs and activities schools have implemented to promote and accomplish student wellness goals.

Exhibit 2-21
Examples of School Activities and Programs to
Promote Student and Family Health and Wellness

Activity/Program	Activity/Program Description
Walking	Mayor's 100 Mile Walk Challenge
	Walk to School Day
	Blue Cross Blue Shield Walking Works for Schools
	Walk Away the Pounds
	Morning Homeroom Walk – 10-minute walks in the morning
Running	School-wide running club
	Fun runs in physical education class
	Mileage Club
	Girls on the Run
Exercise	Fitness testing
	Field Day
	Weekly afterschool fitness program
	Dance and Music Program: "Disco Night"
	Project ACES (All Children Exercising Simultaneously) for Pre-K to 4 kids
	Kids workout program broadcasted in the morning
	Go Fit Fitness Club
	Jump Rope for Heart/Hoops for Heart/Healthy Heart Club
Nutrition	Nutrition Tips in weekly newsletters
	Nutrition bulletin boards
	Students keep a weekly running tally of their consumption of water, fruit and vegetables, and exercise
	The Grow More Healthy monthly food tasting events
	Healthy Head Start: a program on nutrition and healthy food/life choices for 2nd graders– in collaboration with Vanderbilt University
	Nutrition Lecture series to students in grades 3 and 4
	Nutritional Bingo
Information	Nutrient of the month
	Nutrition and How to deal with picky eaters
	Cafeteria Word Wall with healthy foods
	Alternative party food ideas given to teachers for use in classroom parties
	School Health Fair
	Health and Wellness committee newsletter
	Health campaigns
	Self-health evaluation survey of physical education students to assess their personal strength
Family Involvement	Discount coupons to a skating and bowling center to encourage family participation
	Family night activities
	Community Health Fair
	Parent Nutrition Night
	Fruit and Vegetable Festival
	The Cat in the Hat Family Health Night
	Fitness Days for Students and Families at schools one Saturday a month

Exhibit 2-21
Examples of School Activities and Programs to
Promote Student and Family Health and Wellness (Cont'd)

Activity/Program	Activity/Program Description
Garden	School vegetable garden
	Butterfly garden
	Garden Club
Policies	No candy in the school policy
	Teachers are encouraged to use movement in the classroom
	Added health education to curriculum

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Coordinated School Health Program, April 21, 2014.

DETAILED OBSERVATIONS

STUDENT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

OBSERVATION 2-A

The School System has begun a number of research-based initiatives designed to improve learning opportunities for students but has not yet realized the desired levels of success.

In 2009, the School System began implementation of *Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves* a transformational leadership change model aimed at the systematic improvement of student achievement across all sub-groups of students in the system. Leaders from the community and the School System were enlisted to assist in giving direction to the project. In April 2010, the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University began a two-and-one-half year evaluation of the effort with particular emphasis on documentation of the reform efforts made throughout the project.

The first year of *Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves* was dedicated, in large part, to planning. Nine Transformation Leadership Groups and a steering committee to advise the Director of Schools and the Change Leadership Group were established. Most of the groups' attention was dedicated to identifying and studying best practices and how best to implement them. Annenberg reported positive changes in terms of collaborative practices and relationships, developed with community organizations and businesses, through Transformational Leadership Group membership and the high school academies. A five-member Achieves National Advisory Panel composed of experts on educational reform was proposed for year two with meetings twice a year to examine and discuss the reform efforts with community leaders and district officials.

During the second year, there was a sense at the central office that the vision and mission were becoming focused on student improvement, highly effective teaching, leadership development, and continuous improvement. Both campus-based and central office administrators felt that distributive leadership was being practiced to a greater extent than previously, and that the willingness by central office to share decision-making had improved. There was a significant improvement in the emphasis on, and support for, data-informed decision making. The data warehouse was more widely accepted and used although some resistance to the use of data was evident. While some improvements had been made across the School System and at the central office, communications remain a challenge. The

capacity of principals to provide effective leadership improved based on more structured professional development offerings. Accomplishments were noted for all Transformational Leadership Groups as each moved from planning to implementation including:

- creating tier-level professional learning communities, restructuring the English learner coaching system to reach more schools, providing professional development for coaches, expanding services to more schools, planning for an English as a Second Language endorsement and professional development program, and implementing a program which offers literacy and life skills training to non-English-speaking parents (Performance of English Language Learners);

- continuing the focus on a culture of inclusion in all learning environments, developing the capacity of both general and special educators to support student learning, aligning and implementing collaborative professional development support practices, and implementing accelerated learning for students with special needs (Performance of Special Needs Students);

- identifying the characteristics of the School System's graduate; building on the launch of the Academies of Nashville; continuing efforts to garner support and engagement from business; and using teacher collaboration, professional development, and project-based student learning to transform instruction (Performance of High School Students);

- continuing to build a districtwide vision and implementation of the 16 characteristics of middle schools, creating an aligned system of curriculum and assessment, building teacher capacity through professional development, and establishing a school culture that embraces practices and services to support the whole child (Performance of Middle Prep Students);

- ensuring the use of effective instructional practices with disadvantaged youth, aligning curricular resources and data to make instructional decisions, reducing the negative impact of mobility on learning, and increasing student and family supports for health and social services (Performance of Disadvantaged Students);

- redesigning the Human Resources Department to become a high-performing human capital system, hiring a professional development director to lead the efforts, and working at the state level to inform changes to both the teacher and principal evaluation systems (Human Capital);

- framing instructional and operational technology around the federal National Education Technology Plan, supporting instruction and student learning through training and the use of electronic learning tools, updating and supporting the technology infrastructure of the School System, and expanding the capabilities and use by staff of the Data Warehouse (Information Technology);

- implementing a plan for both internal and external communications, focusing on connecting communications to the classroom, and creating a common knowledge base and a more collaborative culture within the central office (Communications); and

- ongoing monitoring and adjusting of central office structures, roles, and resources; creating a culture and developing leaders to support the vision and beliefs of the School System, and benchmarking and measuring the effectiveness of central office leadership practice (Central Office).

Ongoing discussions among the School System, the Annenberg team, and the National Advisory Panel raised concerns about the difficulties in managing 46 initiatives in a complex organization like a school district. Specifically, cautions were voiced relating to the inherent difficulties in achieving unity of understanding and purpose across multiple initiatives and whether the depth, spread, and ownership of the initiatives required to ensure a change in the system's culture could be achieved. To ameliorate these potential project weaknesses, two recommendations for moving *Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves* forward were made by members of the National Advisory Panel. First, the School System should consider 'bundling' the initiatives as a means of reducing the number being implemented. The bundling should occur after the initiatives are prioritized and any explicit connections between and among them determined. Second, the School System should selectively abandon those initiatives perceived as lower priorities in order to better focus efforts and maximize available resources.

The preliminary findings for year three of the project listed a number of accomplishments including increased public confidence, improvements at the high school level, progress on inclusion for English language learners and special needs students, enhancement and use of the system's data infrastructure, development of increased instructional leadership capacity, and some improvements in the culture of the School System such as higher expectations for students. Areas of continuing need included becoming more academically focused at the classroom level, achieving more coherence among the system's multiple initiatives, improving communication between the central office and the schools, and meeting the challenges related to the evaluation of teachers and other professional personnel.

While the *Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Achieves* initiatives are impressive, they are probably too extensive to manage effectively and, therefore, need a narrower focus if the desired changes are to be realized. To that end, the School System should revisit the strategies for improving student performance.

One such strategy that has significant support in research is making student assignments on the basis of changing the socioeconomic mix of low performing schools. A number of studies conducted from the 1960s through 2000 have linked a school's socioeconomic status with student achievement. A re-analysis of the landmark 1966 Coleman Report found that "the social class of the school matters even more to student achievement than does the socioeconomic status of the family." A 2005 University of California study found that "a school's socioeconomic status had as much impact on the achievement growth of high school students in math, science, reading, and history as a student's individual economic status." Data for fifteen-year-olds from the 2006 Programme for International Student Assessment in science showed a "clear advantage in attending a school whose students are, on average, from more advantaged socioeconomic backgrounds." An independent examination of those data showed that Finland, whose secondary education program is often described as excellent, had the very lowest degree of socioeconomic segregation among the 57 participating countries.

Children learn from each other as well as from the teacher. Research has shown that students in high-poverty schools are generally less academically engaged, less likely to do homework, and less likely to

graduate. They are more likely to move during the school year creating disruptions to their academics, and are far less likely to have parents that are engaged in their school life due to such factors as work-place commitments and lack of transportation. Unfortunately, many times the high-poverty schools are also the low-performing ones. The 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress 4th grade math results show that as the percentage of students eligible for a free or reduced price lunch increases, the score on the math test decreases. Although the percentage decrease was slightly greater for middle class students, their scores were higher at all levels than those of low-income students. It is important to note that African American and Hispanic students are the ones most represented in high-poverty, low-income schools.

Traditional turnaround efforts have had mixed results. Approaches that replace staff, use external improvement teams, offer mentoring/coaching by retired school personnel, require additional work on the part of staff such as expanded improvement plans have had little positive long-term effects on improving student achievement. Even some of the most successful charter schools like Knowledge Is Power Program and the Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academies are difficult to scale due to how each chooses to deal with parents, students, and teachers. However, the turnaround model that seems to be the most successful "is one that seeks to turn high-poverty schools into magnet schools that change not only the faculty but also the student and parent mix in the school."

The School System had 18 'magnet' school programs in 2013-2014: five serving the elementary grades (PreK-4 or K-4), eight serving the middle grades (5-8 or 7-8), and five serving the high school grades (9-12). The program emphasis of the magnets varies with Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) and other math/science combinations being the most common. However, based on Academic Performance Framework data, it does not appear that the magnet schools, as presently constituted, or the areas of program emphasis, are contributing to improved academic performance. What does seem to be impacting performance is, as Kahlenberg suggests, the poverty level of students attending the various magnets. The schools with high-poverty levels as determined by the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-priced meals are the ones less likely to reach or maintain either of the two highest Academic Performance Framework ratings, *achieving* or *excelling* as shown in **Exhibit 2-22**.

Exhibit 2-22
The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools' Magnet Programs

School	Grades	Program Emphasis	Overall Academic Performance			Percent	
			2011	2012	2013	Free/ Reduced Price Meals	Minority
Robert Churchwell*	PreK-4	Museum	T	S	T	93.9	96.8
Bailey*	5-8	STEM	T	T	T	92.9	85.0
Carter-Lawrence	PreK-4	Math/Science	R	S	S	92.9	85.0
Hattie Cotton	PreK-4	STEM	T	A	R	92.8	83.0
Pearl-Cohn	9-12	Entertainment	S	T	T	86.4	94.4
John Early*	5-8	Museum	S	S	T	85.0	88.7
Stratford	9-12	STEM	A	T	R	81.2	73.4
Hull-Jackson	PreS-4	Montessori	R	S	S	76.5	96.6
Jones	K-4	Paideia	S	S	S	71.5	96.9
I.T. Creswell	5-8	Performing/visual arts	S	T	R	68.8	75.6
East Nashville	5-8	Paideia	S	S	S	65.2	81.9
	9-12		R	R	S		
Rose Park	5-8	Math/Science	A	E	A	56.7	75.6
Head	5-8	Math/Science	A	E	A	44.4	73.4
MLK Jr.	7-8	Science Research/	S	A	S	28.8	55.2
	9-12	Math/AP	E	E	E		
Meigs	5-8	Liberal Arts	E	E	E	23.6	39.0
Hume-Fogg	9-12	Honors/AP	E	S	A	19.0	34.1
District						**72.4**	**68.2**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Academic Performance Framework; Tennessee Department of Education 2013 School Level Data Files.
*Magnets in the school turnover group.

Many districts are improving student achievement for all students by taking actions to attract students and parents from low-poverty into disadvantaged areas and vice versa. Data from the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress for 4th grade math show that low-income students attending more affluent schools scored almost two years ahead of low-income students in high-poverty schools. More than 65 school districts have acted to reduce concentrations of school poverty by employing socioeconomic status in some fashion in their student assignment policies. Given that the overarching purpose of the School System transformational change efforts is to improve student academic performance, it is strongly suggested that the reduction of high-poverty school populations be given high priority.

RECOMMENDATION 2-A.1

Develop a plan for reducing the concentrations of high-poverty populations in existing K-8 magnet schools.

The School System should:

- revisit the work of the Performance of Disadvantaged Youth Transformational Leadership Group as related to the reduction of high levels of poverty in magnet schools;

- implement a process for obtaining input from students, parents, teachers, and administrators of existing magnet schools on the successes and challenges of current magnet school design;

- conduct focus groups, town hall meetings, surveys, and related activities to identify additional themes, program incentives, or pedagogical approaches for consideration in existing and future magnet schools that would attract students to schools they would not normally attend;

- identify districts that have been successful in reducing concentration of high-poverty school populations;

- review the policies of the identified districts and develop one for consideration by the Board of Education for use in the School System; and

- establish the 2016-2017 school year as the goal for implementing the new design.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

STUDENT BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

OBSERVATION 2-B

The School System has not managed student behavior effectively resulting in a large number of students and a disproportional number of African American students being disciplined. Removing students from the classroom for disciplinary reasons has significant negative academic outcomes and may result in lower academic achievement or academic failure, student academic disengagement, truancy, retention, increased contact with the juvenile justice system, and dropout.

The School System has used exclusionary disciplinary actions such as in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions and expulsions extensively. The number of students disciplined using these exclusionary approaches has remained high or increased since 2009-2010, and is continuing throughout the first six months of 2013-2014. Approximately 20 percent of the School System's students, or an average of about 15,500 students a year, have been sent to in-school suspension annually from 2009-2010 through 2012-2013 as illustrated in **Exhibit 2-23**.

Exhibit 2-23
Total Number of Students with In-School Suspensions 2009-2010 to 2013-2014*
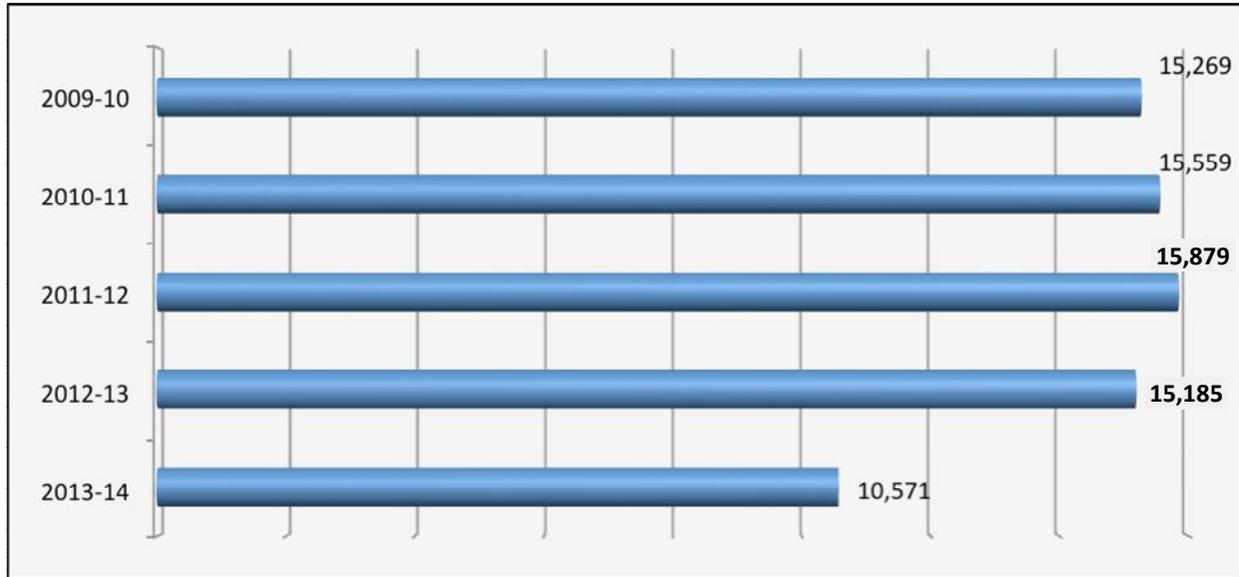
Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, In-school suspension counts. Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 12, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

Exhibit 2-24 shows that about 14 percent or 11,000 students a year also received out-of-school suspensions between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013. The number of students receiving out-of-school suspensions has increased each year from 2009-2010 through 2011-2012 and remained high in 2012-2013 and through January 31, 2014.

Exhibit 2-24
Total Number of Students with Out-of-School Suspensions 2009-2010 to 2013-2014*

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Counts, Office of Chief Support Services Officer,
February 7, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

Expulsion is a more severe form of discipline involving removal from attendance at school for more than ten consecutive days or more than fifteen days in a month of school attendance. The number of expulsions increased almost 50 percent from 2009-2010 to 2010-2011. Expulsions ranged between 500 and 562 cases between 2010-2011 and 2012-2013, and remained high also in the first six months of 2013-2014 as shown in **Exhibit 2-25**.
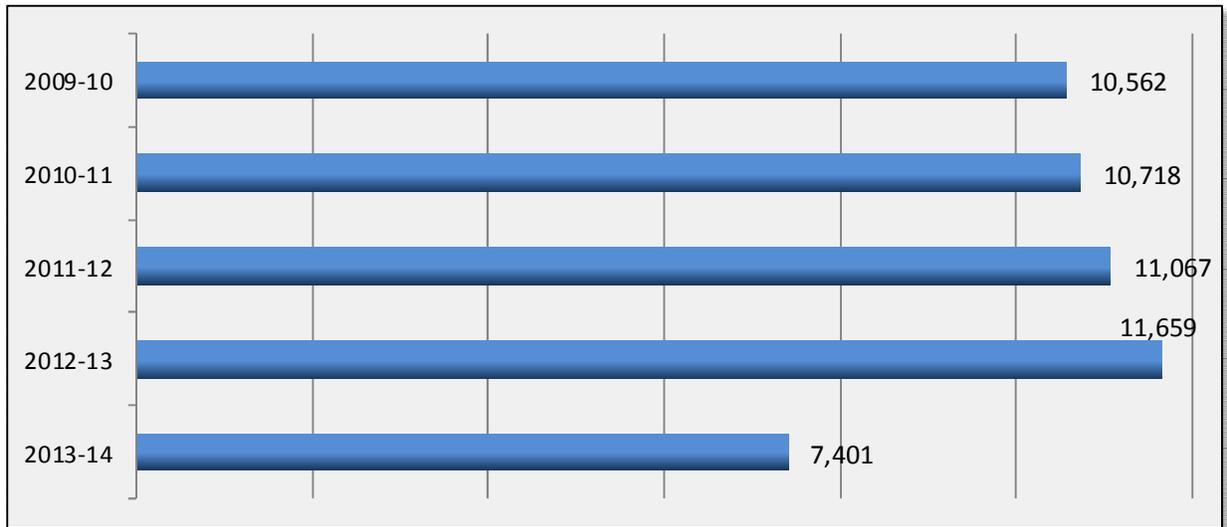
Exhibit 2-25
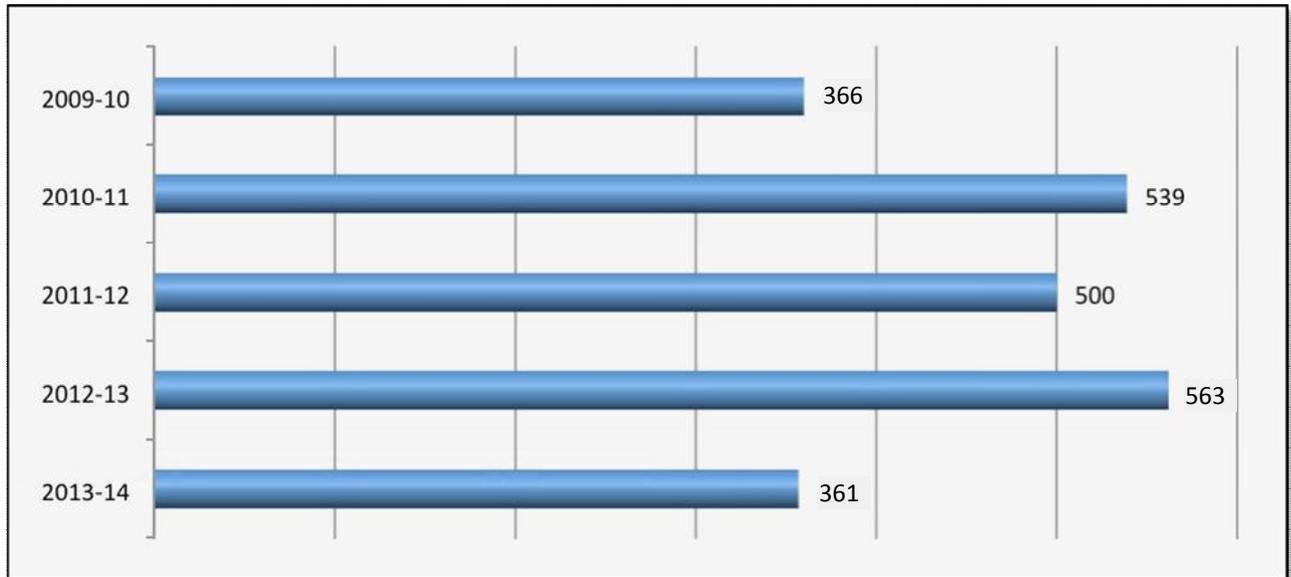**Total Number of Students Expelled 2009-2010 to 2013-2014***

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of Chief Support Services Officer,
February 12, 2014.
**The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.*

The School System meted out, on average, more than 43,000 in-school suspensions a year between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013. High school students accounted for between 53.5 and 55.6 percent of the students with in-school suspensions, and middle school students accounted for between 42.3 and 46.4 percent. During the first six months of 2013-2014, high school students accounted for 57.5 percent of students with in-school suspensions, and middle school students accounted for 42.1 percent, as shown in **Exhibit 2-26**.

Exhibit 2-26
Number and Percentage of Students with In-School Suspensions by School Level
2009-2010 to 2013-2014*

	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Total Number of Students	15,269	100%	15,559	100%	15,879	100%	15,185	100%	10,571	100%
Elementary School Students (PK-4)**	322	2.1%	26	0.1%	28	0.2%	33	0.2%	41	0.4%
Middle School Students (Grades 5-8)	6,464	42.3%	7,089	45.6%	7,210	45.4%	7,046	46.4%	4,456	42.1%
High School Students (Grades 9-12)	8,483	55.6%	8,446	54.3%	8,641	54.4%	8,106	53.4%	6,074	57.5%
Number of Incidents	43,152		44,066		44,744		41,254		21,947	

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 12, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.
**The number of elementary school students includes PK.

The School System also experienced, on average, about 22,000 out-of-school suspension incidents between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013. High schools students accounted for between 43.7 and 48.6 percent of students who received out-of-school suspensions, and middle school students accounted for between 39.4 and 41.5 percent. During the first six months of 2013-2014, high school students accounted for 48.7 percent of the students receiving out-of-school suspensions, and middle school students accounted for 38.0 percent, as shown in **Exhibit 2-27**.

Exhibit 2-27
Number and Percentage of Students with Out-of-School-Suspensions by School Level
2009-2010 to 2013-2014*

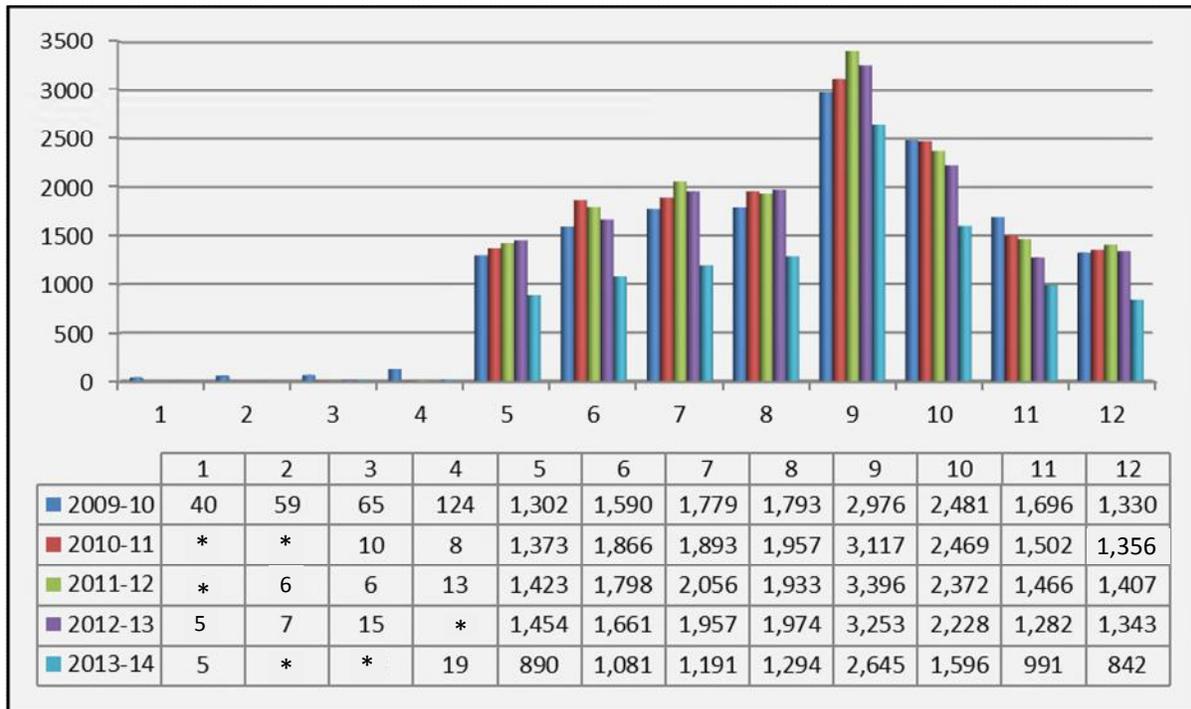| School Levels	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Total Number of Students	10,562	100%	10,718	100%	11,067	100%	11,659	100%	7,401	100%
Elementary School Students (PK-4)*	1,266	12.0%	1,349	12.6%	1,496	13.5%	1,729	14.8%	983	13.3%
Middle School Students (Grades 5-8)	4,162	39.4%	4,319	40.3%	4,493	40.6%	4,838	41.5%	2,816	38.0%
High School Students (Grades 9-12)	5,134	48.6%	5,050	47.1%	5,078	45.9%	5,092	43.7%	3,602	48.7%
Total Number of Incidents	21,284		21,112		21,973		23,141		12,320	

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 7, 2014.
*The number of elementary school students includes PK students.
**The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

The analysis of disciplinary actions by grade level points to students in the ninth and tenth grades as accounting for the largest number of students disciplined across all disciplinary action categories, followed by seventh and eighth grade students. On average, nearly 3,200 ninth grade and nearly 2,400 tenth grade students received in-school suspensions between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013 as presented in **Exhibit 2-28**. In-school suspensions were also high among seventh and eighth grade students who averaged more than 1,900 in-school suspensions a year.

Exhibit 2-28
Number of Students with In-School Suspensions by Grade Level
2009-2010 to 2013-2014**

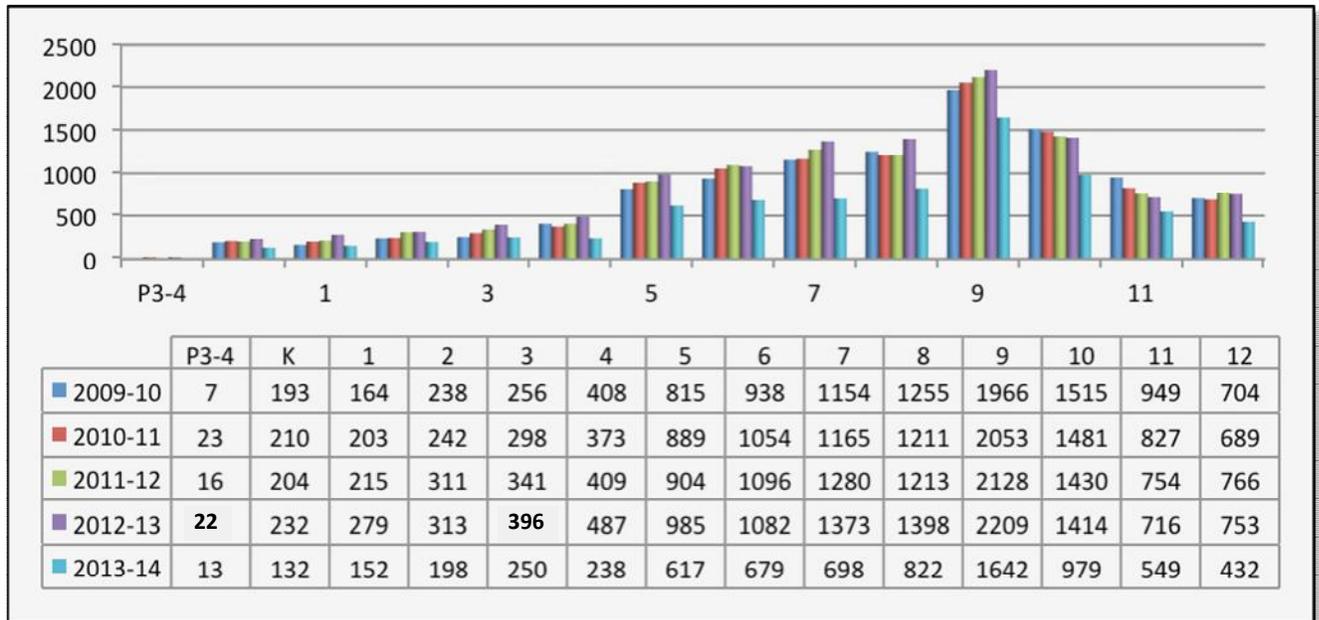|	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2009-10	40	59	65	124	1,302	1,590	1,779	1,793	2,976	2,481	1,696	1,330
2010-11	*	*	10	8	1,373	1,866	1,893	1,957	3,117	2,469	1,502	1,356
2011-12	*	6	6	13	1,423	1,798	2,056	1,933	3,396	2,372	1,466	1,407
2012-13	5	7	15	*	1,454	1,661	1,957	1,974	3,253	2,228	1,282	1,343
2013-14	5	*	*	19	890	1,081	1,191	1,294	2,645	1,596	991	842

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 12, 2014
*The number and percentage of students in Grades 1-4 are not shown in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) because one or more of these grade levels had fewer than five students with In-school suspensions.
**The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

The same pattern was also evident with regard to out-of-school suspensions. On average, ninth grade students accounted for about 2,100 out-of-school suspensions a year between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013; tenth grade students accounted on average for about 1,500 out-of-school suspensions. Seventh and eighth grade students averaged between 1,243 and 1,269 out-of-school suspensions, respectively as reflected in **Exhibit 2-29**.

Exhibit 2-29
Number of Students with Out-of-School-Suspensions by Grade Level
2009-2010 to 2013-2014*

	P3-4	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2009-10	7	193	164	238	256	408	815	938	1154	1255	1966	1515	949	704
2010-11	23	210	203	242	298	373	889	1054	1165	1211	2053	1481	827	689
2011-12	16	204	215	311	341	409	904	1096	1280	1213	2128	1430	754	766
2012-13	22	232	279	313	396	487	985	1082	1373	1398	2209	1414	716	753
2013-14	13	132	152	198	250	238	617	679	698	822	1642	979	549	432

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 7, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

Among the out-of-school suspension offense categories, violation of school rules and fighting represented the two major offense categories, accounting for more than 80 percent of students with out-of-school suspension offenses as shown in **Exhibits 2-30 and 2-31**. Between 61.2 and 63.0 percent, or nearly 8,900 students, on average, violated school rules between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013; 66.3 percent or 6,001 students violated school rules in the first six months of 2013-2014. Between 18.6 and 21.3 percent, or an average of 2,800 students, committed a fighting offense between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013; 17.6 percent, or 1,590 students, did so in the first six months of 2013-2014.

Exhibit 2-30
Number and Percentage of Students by Out-of-School Suspension Offense Categories
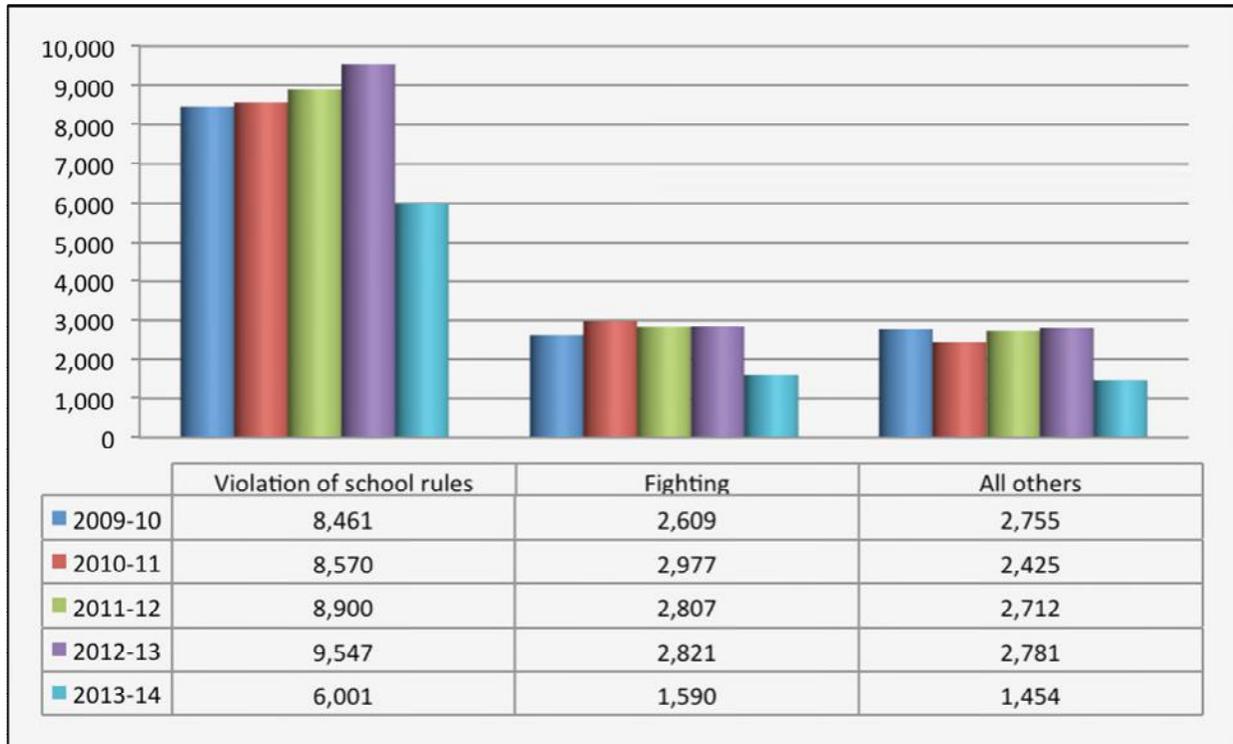**2009-2010 to 2013-2014**

Out of School Suspension Offense Category	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Aggravated assault of student	11	0.1	15	0.1%	26	0.2%	14	0.1%	6	0.1%
Aggravated assault of teacher or staff	37	0.3%	7	0.1%	8	0.1%	*	*	*	*
Assault of student	482	3.5%	466	3.3%	489	3.4%	533	3.5%	249	2.8%
Assault of teacher or staff	124	0.9%	83	0.6%	65	0.5%	33	0.2%	19	0.2%
Bomb threat	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bullying	376	2.7%	548	3.9%	578	4.0%	411	2.7%	220	2.4%
Fighting	2,609	18.9%	2,977	21.3%	2,807	19.5%	2,821	18.6%	1,590	17.6%
Non-lethal firearm	66	0.5%	37	0.3%	33	0.2%	20	0.1%	0	0.0%
Other type of threat	590	4.3%	456	3.3%	459	3.2%	518	3.4%	289	3.2%
Possession of explosive/incendiary device	*	*	*	*	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Possession of handgun	*	*	*	*	*	*	0	0.0%	*	*
Possession of weapon other than firearm	111	0.8%	88	0.6%	99	0.7%	95	0.6%	74	0.8%
Possession/Use/ Distribution of alcohol	23	0.2%	49	0.4%	19	0.1%	44	0.3%	28	0.3%
Possession/Use/ Distribution of illegal drugs	156	1.1%	33	0.2%	234	1.6%	294	1.9%	150	1.7%
Sexual assault	13	0.1%	12	0.1%	12	0.1%	5	0.0%	5	0.1%
Sexual harassment	212	1.5%	169	1.2%	163	1.1%	182	1.2%	93	1.0%
Theft of property	285	2.1%	251	1.8%	283	2.0%	376	2.5%	196	2.2%
Vandalism/Damage of property	269	2.0%	211	1.5%	244	1.8%	256	1.7%	125	1.4%
Violation of school rules	8,461	61.2%	8,570	61.3%	8,900	61.7%	9,547	63.0%	6,001	66.3%
Total Number of Students	**13,830**		**13,975**		**14,423**		**15,153**		**9,051**	
Number of Incidents	**22,629**		**22,373**		**23,331**		**24,276**		**13,082**	

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 7, 2014.
*The number and percentage of students not shown for specific offenses in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) because one or more of these offenses involved fewer than five students.
**The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

Exhibit 2-31
Number and Percentage of Students by Out-of-School Suspension Offense Categories
2009-2010 to 2013-2014

	Violation of school rules	Fighting	All others
2009-10	8,461	2,609	2,755
2010-11	8,570	2,977	2,425
2011-12	8,900	2,807	2,712
2012-13	9,547	2,821	2,781
2013-14	6,001	1,590	1,454

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 7, 2014
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

On average, 515 students were expelled annually between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013; 366 were expelled in the first six months of 2013-2014. Between 76.6 and 85.9 percent of students who were expelled between 2009-2010 and 2013-2014 were high school students, and between 14.8 and 33.6 percent were middle school students as presented in **Exhibits 2-32**.

Exhibit 2-32
Number and Percentage of Middle School and High School Students Expelled
2009-2010 to 2013-2014

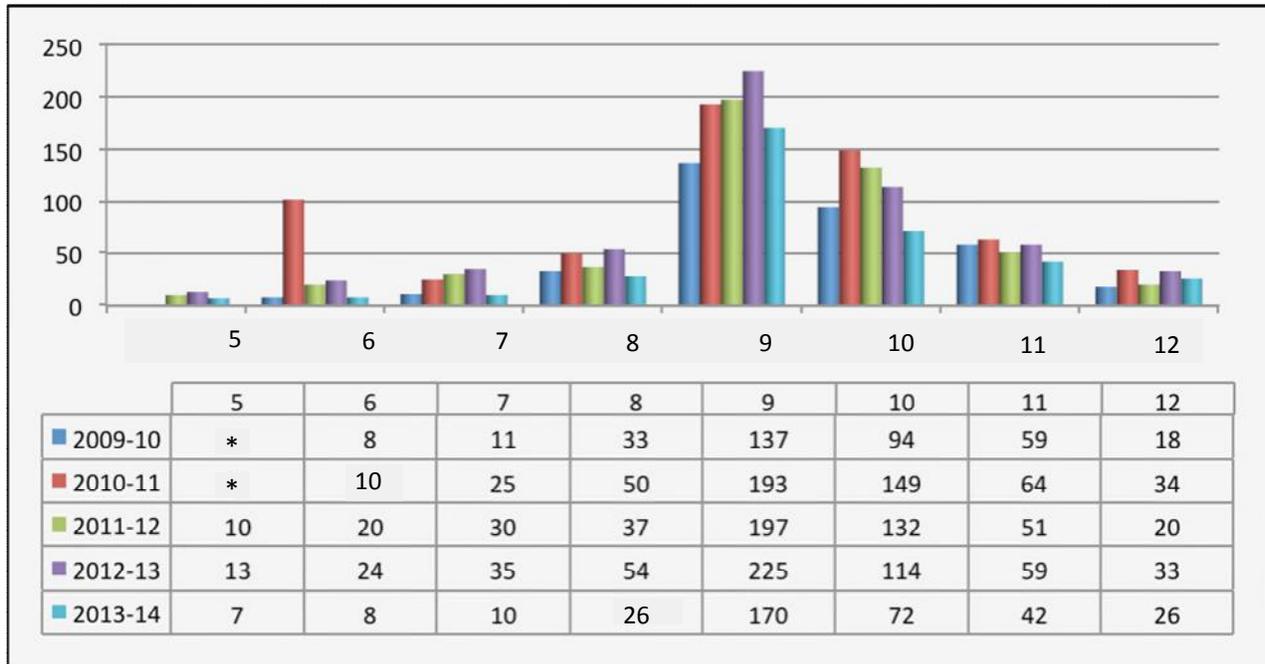| Grades	2009-2010		2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Total Number of Students	366	100%	539	100%	500	100%	563	100%	361	100%
Middle School Students (Grades 5-8)	54	14.8%	89	33.6%	97	19.4%	126	22.4%	51	14.1%
High School Students (Grades 9-12)	308	84.2%	440	81.6%	400	80.0%	431	76.6%	310	85.9%
Number of Incidents	364		548		508		566		366	

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 12, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.
**Elementary school students are not included because the number expelled was five or higher only in two of the five years.

A similar grade level pattern for expulsions as for in-school and out-of-school suspensions emerged. Ninth grade students constituted the largest group of students expelled, ranging from 137 students in 2009-2010 to 225 in 2012-2013. In the first six months of 2013-2014, 170 ninth grade students were expelled as presented in **Exhibit 2-33**. Ninth grade students accounted for between 37.4 and 47.1 percent of expulsions.

Exhibit 2-33
Number of Students Expelled by Grade Level
2009-2010 to 2013-2014*

	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
2009-10	*	8	11	33	137	94	59	18
2010-11	*	10	25	50	193	149	64	34
2011-12	10	20	30	37	197	132	51	20
2012-13	13	24	35	54	225	114	59	33
2013-14	7	8	10	26	170	72	42	26

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Discipline, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 12, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.
**The number of students not shown (*) are in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) because one or more of these grade levels had fewer than five students expelled.

Prior to 2013-2014, student behavior management was an individual school responsibility and was not addressed at the School System level. While the School System has a code of conduct, based on the state of Tennessee's, principals have been given discretion to implement discipline procedures in ways they considered most advantageous to their schools. Consequently, implementation has not been consistent systemwide.

The School System has implemented several behavior management programs. Many elementary schools implemented the School Wide Positive Behavior Support program, and, in 2013-2014, the middle schools implemented the Why Try program which uses social workers to work with at-risk students. The Why Try program is research-based and aims to reduce failure and expulsion, decrease rule-breaking behaviors, improve self-concept and emotional health, increase resiliency as well as improve students' academic progress, performance, and graduation rates. Under this program, social workers meet weekly with individuals or small groups of students with high rates of suspensions. The School System also implemented a First Time Drug Offenders program which aims to avoid the mandatory year expulsion for students with drug offenses. Under this program students with a first drug offense receive a five-day expulsion and must attend a Saturday class.

The detrimental impact of suspensions on students' academic achievement has been demonstrated in multiple studies:
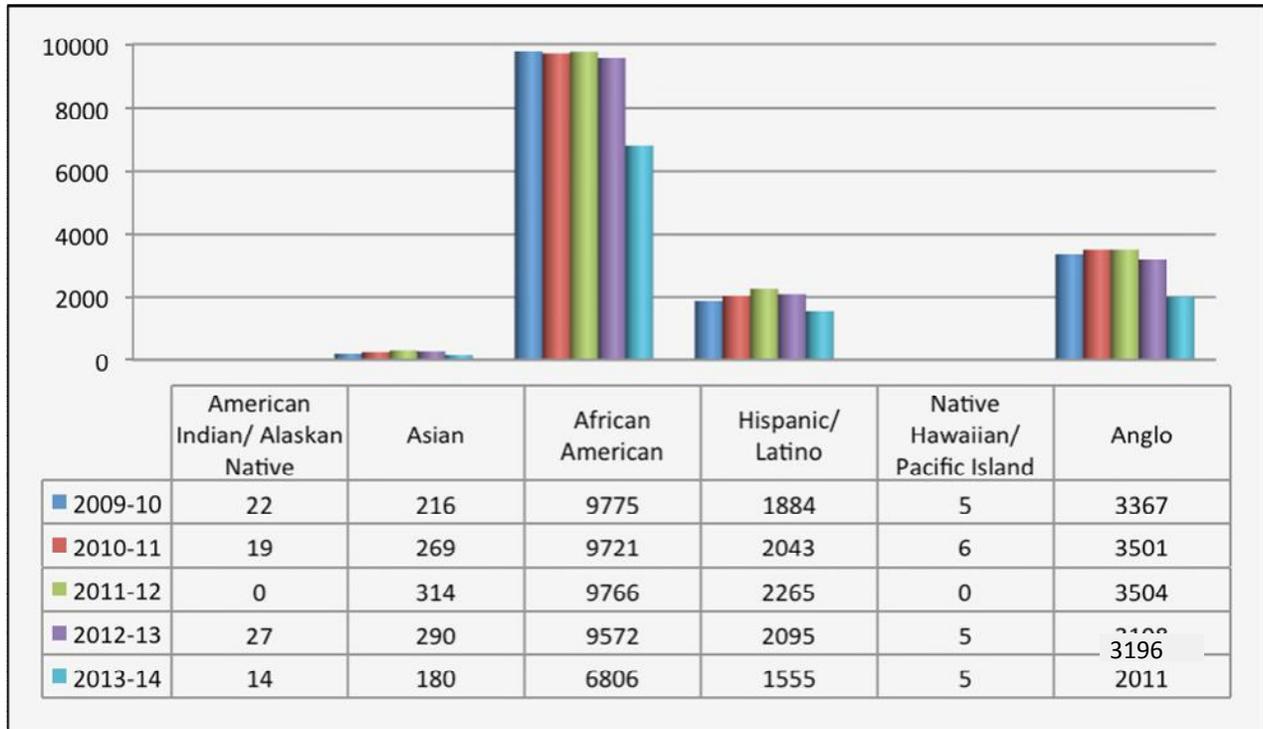
- According to a Florida study, 73 percent of ninth grade students who were suspended failed their courses compared with 36 percent of students who were not suspended.

- Even one suspension doubles the dropout risk and each additional suspension increases the dropout risk by 20 percent, according to this study.

- Suspension and expulsion for a discretionary school violation nearly triples a student's likelihood of contact with the juvenile justice system within the subsequent year.

In addition to a high and persistent rate of disciplinary actions, the School System's disciplinary actions data shows racial disparity with regard to African American students, a problem not unique to the School System. National studies indicate that African American students are 1.78 times more likely to receive out-of-school suspensions than Anglo students, twice as likely at the elementary level as Anglo students to be given disciplinary referrals, and four times as likely at the secondary level. The rate of out-of-school suspensions for African American elementary school students is 5.5 percent higher than the rate for Anglo students, and 17 percent higher at the secondary level. African American students with disabilities are also likely to face disciplinary actions at a disproportional rate. Nationally, 25 percent of African American students with disabilities received an out-of-school suspension at least once in 2009-2010.

In the School System from 2009-2010 through 2012-2013:

- More than 60 percent of the students given in-school suspension were African American, although African American students comprise about 45 percent of the student population (**Exhibit 2-34**).

- More than two-thirds of the students given out-of-school suspension were African American. In 2012-2013, nearly 70 percent of the students given out-of-school suspensions were African American (**Exhibit 2-35**).

- More than 60 percent of the students who were expelled between 2009-2010 and January 31, 2014 were African American. Through January 2014, 77.6 percent of the students expelled were African American (**Exhibit 2-36**).
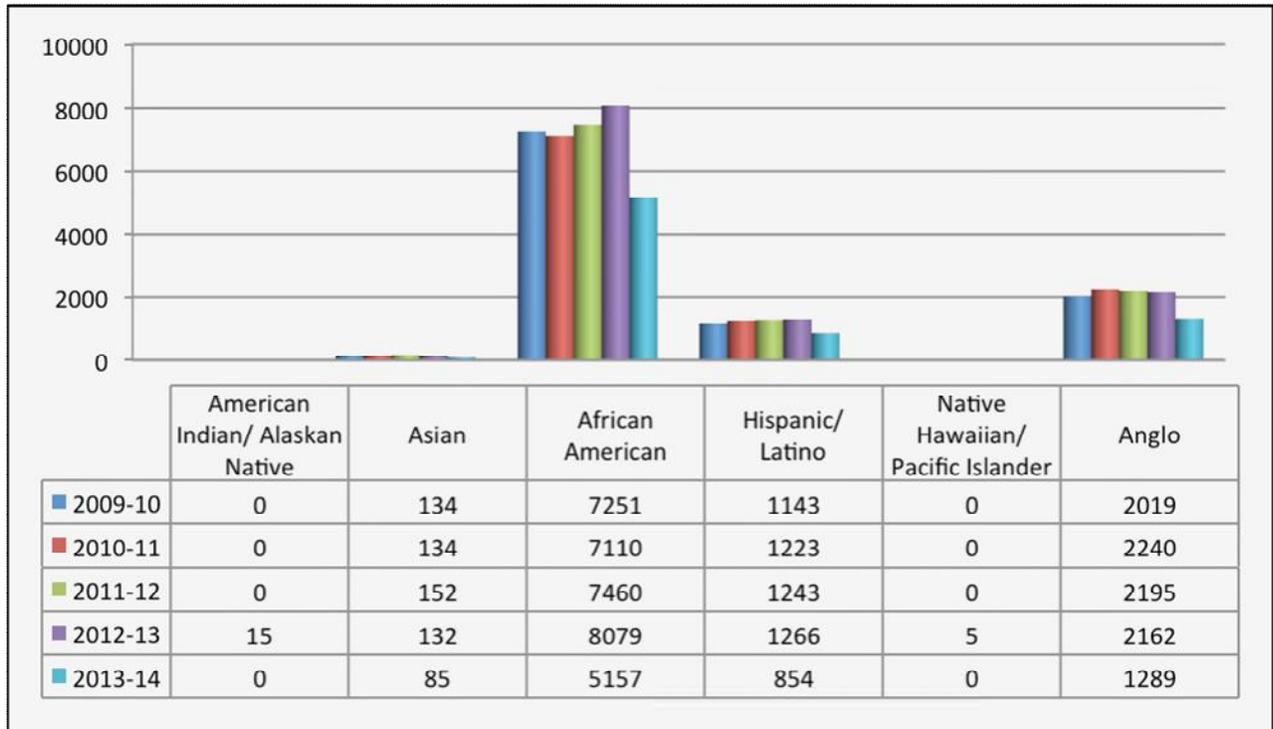
Exhibit 2-34
Number of Students with In-School Suspensions by Ethnicity
2009-2010 to 2013-2014

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Island	Anglo
2009-10	22	216	9775	1884	5	3367
2010-11	19	269	9721	2043	6	3501
2011-12	0	314	9766	2265	0	3504
2012-13	27	290	9572	2095	5	3196
2013-14	14	180	6806	1555	5	2011

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, In-School Suspension Counts. Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 12, 2014.
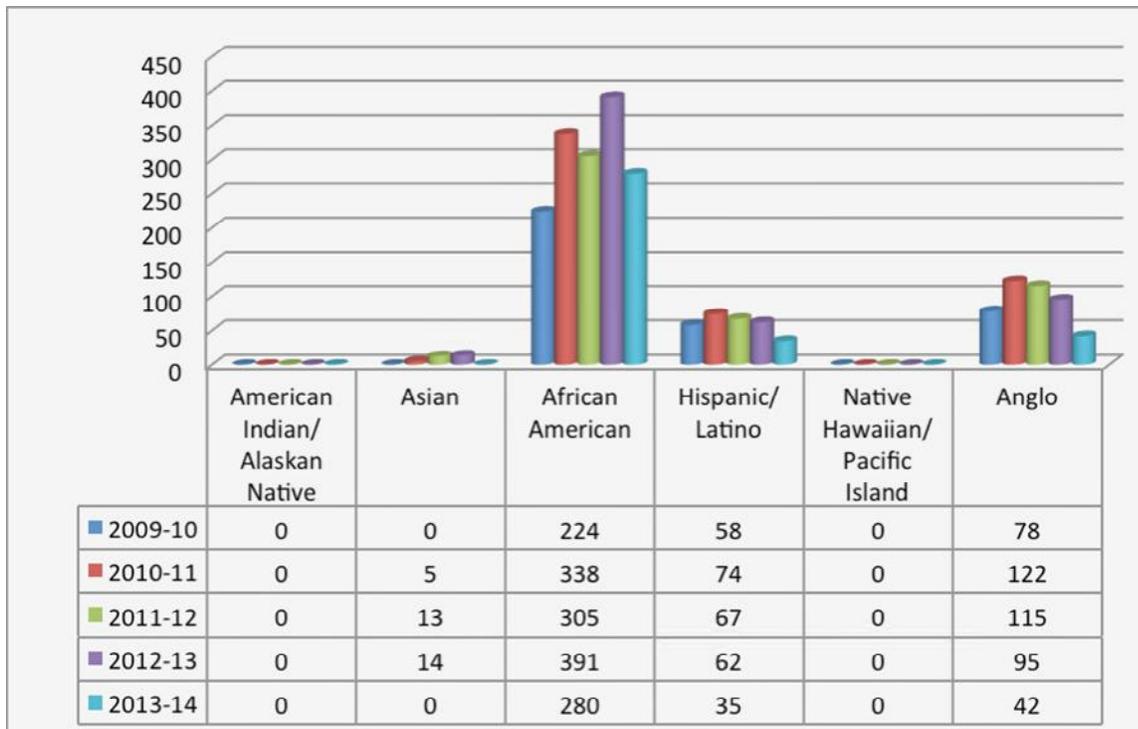**The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.*

Exhibit 2-35
Number of Students with Out-of-School Suspensions by Ethnicity
2009-2010 to 2013-2014

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Anglo
2009-10	0	134	7251	1143	0	2019
2010-11	0	134	7110	1223	0	2240
2011-12	0	152	7460	1243	0	2195
2012-13	15	132	8079	1266	5	2162
2013-14	0	85	5157	854	0	1289

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Out-of-School Suspension Counts, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 7, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

Exhibit 2-36
Number of Students Expelled by Ethnicity
2009-2010 to 2013-2014

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Island	Anglo
2009-10	0	0	224	58	0	78
2010-11	0	5	338	74	0	122
2011-12	0	13	305	67	0	115
2012-13	0	14	391	62	0	95
2013-14	0	0	280	35	0	42

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 12, 2014.
*The 2013-2014 data are through January 31, 2014.

Research has shown that the disproportional rates of disciplinary actions involving African American students cannot be explained by poverty, more frequent misbehavior, or more aggressive behavior. These disparities are more likely to be explained by school-level variables such as the achievement gap, the level of ethnic/racial diversity of the faculty relative to students' diversity, classroom and office processes, and school climate.

An extensive body of research shows that excessive disciplinary actions harm all students, teachers, and the school climate and culture; are neither educationally nor economically efficient; and do not result in safer schools. A series of studies supported by Atlantic Philanthropies and the Open Society Foundations found that:

- Disciplinary disparities may be a result of inequity in the distribution of resources with fewer high quality teachers assigned to schools with fewer and poorer resources, and a high percentage of minorities. This results in higher rates of teacher turnover, lower student engagement, and fewer well-managed classrooms.

- Non-minority teachers may lack knowledge and understanding of their students' culture, an important component of learning. Nationally, 9.3 percent of the teaching force is African American, 7.4 percent is Hispanic, 2.3 percent is Asian, and 1.2 percent is another race, compared with 80 percent Anglo.

- Disparity-reducing intervention efforts are more productive by focusing on changing the school climate and culture. While high suspension rates may increase feelings of safety, they also diminish the school climate. Strong student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships are associated with decreased suspension rates and the promotion of an increased sense of safety.

Effective behavior management practices promote the application of alternative discipline systems that reduce reliance on punitive and exclusionary approaches. While the practices below have been effective overall, they were not effective in reducing discipline-related racial disparities:

- Code of Conduct changes from a reactive, punitive and exclusionary approach to a preventive approach to discipline with an increased use of non-punitive responses to student misbehavior and limited use of suspension and expulsion.

- Structural interventions such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, changing disciplinary codes of conduct and Threat Assessment have been shown to reduce use of exclusionary disciplinary rates. The School System has modified its zero tolerance drug offense behavior code through its First Time Drug Offender program offering opportunities to first drug offenders to expedite their return to the classroom.

- Social-emotional learning approaches improve schools' ability to understand and regulate students' social interactions and emotions, and reduce student misbehavior and out-of-school suspensions. As one of eight school districts nationally, Metropolitan Nashville School System is participating in a Collaborative for Academic, Social, Emotional Learning grant and is implementing a social and emotional learning approach that promotes self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The approach is implemented in elementary schools and will be piloted in 2014-2015 in two middle schools. For example, Austin Independent School District (Texas), one of the eight districts, has implemented the program in 73 schools serving approximately 47,000 students. In 2012-2013, the freshman class had a 20 percent reduction in class failures and a 28 percent decrease in discipline referrals compared to the freshmen class the year before.

Approaches proven to be highly effective with African American students include:

- Strong teacher-student and parent-student relationships. Schools that promote such relationships through sustained support for teacher development are more effective in keeping schools safe without resorting to use of exclusionary discipline. African American principals in urban schools who promoted parent involvement reduced the rate of suspensions. Research had shown that programs like My Teaching Partner that focus on teacher interactions with students and rely less on exclusionary discipline for all students had a significant impact on reducing exclusionary discipline with African American students.

- Implementation of restorative practices throughout the school aim to proactively build relationships and a sense of community and both prevent and resolve conflict. Some research has shown that such practices may be linked to reduced suspensions and expulsions, decreased disciplinary referrals, and improved academics across all student groups— but most significantly for African American students.

- Use of a protocol that assesses threats of violence without resorting to zero tolerance suspensions has shown to reduce suspensions and African American-Anglo disparities.

RECOMMENDATION 2-B.1.

Identify and implement behavior management strategies that have been proven effective in reducing the need for disciplinary actions for all students and in reducing racial disparities in discipline.

The Cluster Support Executive Director should:

- analyze and disaggregate its disciplinary actions data by disciplinary action categories, school, grade level, and student subpopulations;

- undertake a comprehensive review of its discipline policies and code of conduct and assess the effectiveness of its behavior management programs and strategies;

- identify programs, strategies, and practices that have proved effective in managing student behavior and reducing disciplinary actions;

- identify programs, strategies, and practices that have proved effective in addressing and reducing racial disparities in discipline. Adopt discipline approaches that are aligned with effective practices in supporting positive student behavior and in addressing racial disparities; and

- integrate those approaches into a coherent systemwide discipline management plan that incorporates best practices, training programs, monitoring strategies, and annual data analysis to review changes in disciplinary actions.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE: MINORITY STUDENTS

OBSERVATION 2-C

The School Systems' African American students and students with disabilities are disproportionally assigned to disciplinary alternative learning centers. Placing students in disciplinary alternative education programs increases their risk level for disengagement from school, academic failure, and dropout.

Since 2009-2010, the School System has operated four alternative learning centers although the locations and grade level configurations have changed. In 2013-2014, the School System's four centers were located at Glenn Elementary for students in grades K-4, at Middle School Alternative Learning Center for students in grades 5-8, and at Johnson Alternative Learning Center and W.A. Bass Alternative Learning Center for students in grades 9-12. The maximum enrollment at Glenn Elementary is 15 students; 80 students at Middle School Alternative Learning Center; 120 students at Bass Alternative Learning Center; and 150 students at Johnson Alternative Learning Center. Typically, the alternative learning center has a principal, a lead teacher, a teacher for English language learners, an exceptional

education teacher, and a counselor. The alternative learning centers coordinate instruction with students' home schools. Teachers cover all core areas. Additional staff includes a social worker at the Middle School Alternative Learning Center and an assistant principal at the Bass Alternative Learning Center. In addition, a transition specialist follows up with the student after the student returns to the home campus. Before students return to their home campuses, alternative learning center staff has an exit meeting with the student, provides a copy of the student's grades to the home campus, and sends a letter to the home campus notifying them when the student is returning.

From 2009-2010 through 2012-2013, African American students were disproportionally assigned to the School System's alternative learning centers. During that period, African American students represented between 74 and 84 percent of all student referrals to alternative learning centers while their percentage of the total School System's student population ranged between 45.2 and 47.5 as presented in **Exhibit 2-37**.

Exhibit 2-37
Number and Percentage of Students by Ethnicity in Alternative Learning Centers
2009-2010 to 2012-2013

	African American		Hispanic		Anglo		Total*
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N
2009-2010							
McCann Alternative Learning Center	59	79.7%	7	0.9%	7	0.9%	74
Baxter Alternative Learning Center	138	74.6%	23	12.4%	23	12.4%	185
Cohn Alternative Learning Center	88	80.0%	5	4.5%	16	14.5%	110
Percentage of Ethnic Group in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools		47.5%	**	15.9%		32.6%	
2010-2011							
McCann Alternative Learning Center	70	84.3%	**	-	**	-	83
Baxter Alternative Learning Center	129	73.7%	16	0.9%	30	17.1%	175
Cohn Alternative Learning Center	100	75.8%	11	0.8%	21	15.9%	132
Percentage of Ethnic Group in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools		46.8%	**	16.7%		32.3%	

Exhibit 2-37
Number and Percentage of Students by Ethnicity in Alternative Learning Centers
2009-2010 to 2012-2013 (Cont'd)

	African American		Hispanic		Anglo		Total*
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N
2011-2012							
McCann Alternative Learning Center	61	75.3%	11	13.6%	8	1.0%	81
Baxter Alternative Learning Center	140	79.1%	13	7.3%	24	13.6%	177
Cohn Alternative Learning Center	91	79.1%	6	0.5%	15	13.0%	115
Percentage of Ethnic Group in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools		46.2%		17.5%		32.0%	
2012-2013							
McCann Alternative Learning Center	81	78.6%	8	7.8%	14	13.6%	103
Baxter Alternative Learning Center	161	75.6%	22	10.3%	27	12.7%	213
Bass Alternative Learning Center	101	80.2%	8	6.3%	13	10.3%	126
Percentage of Ethnic Group in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools		45.2%		18.8%		31.6%	

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 2014.
*Total refers to the total number of students remanded to the respective alternative learning center. The exhibit, however, does not show the number of Asian, American Indian or Pacific Islander because fewer than five were remanded to alternative learning centers. This is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 34CFR Part 99.1.
**Number of Hispanic and Anglo students is not shown in compliance with FERPA because one of these groups had fewer than five students remanded to alternative learning centers.

This trend has continued in the first half of 2013-2014. Through January 31, 2014 the percentage of African American students in the Middle School Alternative Learning Center, the Bass Alternative Learning Center, and the Johnson Alternative Learning Center ranged from 73.4 to 80.5 compared to their representation in the overall the School System's student population of 44.6. Similarly, the percentage of African American students with disabilities or who are economically disadvantaged that were placed in alternative learning centers was disproportionally higher than their percentage in the total student population and referenced in **Exhibit 2-38**.

Attendance at the alternative learning centers is low compared with the School System's overall attendance rate of 96 percent. The attendance rates at the three centers serving students in grades 5-12 are 12 to 17.5 percentage points lower than the district rate. A contributing factor to low attendance at the high school alternative learning centers is the lack of transportation. High school students assigned to an alternative learning center have to provide their own transportation; consequently, students who

are unable to provide their own transportation are not required to attend which results in jeopardizing their academic performance further.

Exhibit 2-38
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools and Alternative Learning Center Demographics 2013-2014*

Demographics	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools		Middle School Alternative Learning Center	Bass Alternative Learning Center	Johnson Alternative Learning Center
	Number	Percent			
Number of Students	82,863	100.0%	103	94	128
African American Students	36,985	44.6%	76.7%	73.4%	80.5%
Anglo Students	26,496	32.0%	15.6%	10.6%	9.4%
Hispanic Students	15,792	19.0%	7.8%	16.0%	8.6%
English Language Learners	22,291	26.9%	3.9%	1.1%	3.1%
Students with Disabilities	9,930	12.0%	22.3%	20.2%	21.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	55,076	66.5%	93.2%	92.6%	89.8%
Attendance Rate	96.1%		84.1%	78.4%	83.7%
Percent Missing More than 5 Days			47.6%	73.4%	59.4%

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Facts 2013-2014 and School Profiles. Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Middle School Alternative Learning Center School Profile.
*Data for 2013-2014 is up to January 31, 2014.

Removing students from their home campuses, isolating them from their peers, and transferring them to alternative placements increases their disengagement from school, and contributes to their academic failure and potential for dropping out. Implementing behavior management programs and disciplinary strategies that reduce discipline problems and placements in alternative education settings is critical. Effective programs and strategies associated with lower placements in disciplinary alternative education settings, especially for minority students, include the following:

- positive and caring teacher-student relationships;

- high academic, social and behavioral expectations; preventive and proactive school discipline practices through school wide positive behavior interventions and support;

- parental involvement; restorative practices focusing on meeting student needs, using strategies such as peer courts and other approaches that seek to remedy bad behavior rather than expelling or assigning students to alternative settings; and

- innovative programs such as the Conscious Discipline program which combines social-emotional learning with discipline or the Health Teacher program, an online curriculum that integrates health and health literacy, have shown to significantly reduce the rate of disciplinary problems.

RECOMMENDATION 2-C.1

Implement behavior management strategies that have been proved effective in reducing racial disparities in discipline, especially those associated with placement in disciplinary alternative education settings.

This recommendation should be implemented as part of the recommendation associated with Observation 2.B dealing with student behavior management overall, and with racial disparities involving all disciplinary categories. With regard to racial disparities in placing students in alternative education centers, The Cluster Support Executive Director should:

- conduct an analysis of the mandatory and non-mandatory reasons for remanding students in general, and minority students in particular to alternative education centers;

- identify programs and behavior management strategies that have proved effective in reducing placements to disciplinary alternative education programs for African American students and students with disabilities;

- incorporate these strategies with the other behavior management and discipline strategies into a comprehensive behavior management framework;

- ensure that the training conducted on student behavior management and discipline addresses the strategies specific to placements in alternative education centers; and

- track and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in reducing placements to alternative learning centers for African American students and students with disabilities.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

OBSERVATION 2-D

The assessment process used by the School System's Gifted and Talented program does not fully address the identification of gifted students who are members of historically under-represented student populations.

An audit of the School System's gifted services in 2012 documented that minority, economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, and special education students are under-identified in the School System's K-8 Encore program for the gifted and that "policies and processes for an equitable and fair identification system reflecting the demographic make-up of Metropolitan Nashville were not defined, communicated, or administered consistently across all grade levels and schools." The audit found that cultural diversity was not acknowledged "in an effective way that identifies or meets the needs of gifted and potentially gifted students." Furthermore, the assessments used to identify students are not inclusive or evidence-supported and may fall short in identifying culturally diverse students. **Exhibit 2-39** shows participation in Encore from 2009-2010 through January 31, 2014.

Exhibit 2-39
Number and Percentage of Overall and Encore Students by School Level and Student Characteristics –
2009-2010 to 2013-2014

Level	Enrollment	Student Subpopulations						
		African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Reduced and Free Lunch	Special Ed	English Language Learners	Limited English Proficiency
2009-2010								
Elementary								
Total	35,137	44.4%	18.5%	33.0%	73.0%	12.0%	14.4%	18.6%
Encore	1,470 (4.2%)	21.0%	4.1%	67.4%	26.0%	4.9%	0.7%	2.9%
Middle								
Total	19,843	47.9%	15.7%	32.7%	71.0%	12.1%	8.1%	10.1%
Encore	776 (3.9%)	20.9%	3.9%	68.6%	25.0%	4.0%	0.1%	0.4%
2010-2011								
Elementary								
Total	36,109	44.0%	19.3%	32.8%	75.2%	12.7%	15.0%	19.6%
Encore	1,787 (4.9%)	20.0%	4.8%	66.5%	27.3%	4.2%	0.7%	3.5%
Middle								
Total	18,091	50.0%	15.6%	30.8%	74.1%	13.4%	6.9%	9.0%
Encore	1,127 (6.2%)	20.5%	4.4%	68.3%	27.9%	4.3%	0.0%	0.3%
2011-2012								
Elementary								
Total	37,170	43.3%	19.7%	33.1%	75.2%	12.9%	15.7%	20.3%
Encore	2,043 (5.5%)	18.4%	5.3%	68.0%	28.5%	5.1%	0.8%	2.9%
Middle								
Total	20,592	46.4%	17.4%	32.0%	74.8%	13.4%	8.0%	10.4%
Encore	1,271 (6.2%)	20.8%	6.0%	65.1%	30.3%	3.4%	0.2%	0.3%

Exhibit 2-39
Number and Percentage of Overall and Encore Students by School Level and Student Characteristics –
2009-2010 to 2013-2014 (Cont'd)

Level	Enrollment	Student Subpopulations						
		African American	Hispanic	Anglo	Reduced and Free Lunch	Special Ed	English Language Learners	Limited English Proficiency
2012-2013								
Elementary								
Total	37,828	42.0%	21.4%	32.6%	76.3%	12.2%	16.6%	21.1%
Encore	1,819 (4.8%)	18.0%	5.8%	68.1%	27.1%	5.1%	0.3%	2.5%
Middle								
Total	21,308	46.1%	18.4%	31.2%	75.5%	13.7%	8.1%	10.9%
Encore	1,418 (6.7%)	23.1%	6.7%	61.8%	35.8%	3.5%	0.1%	0.3%
2013-2014*								
Elementary								
Total	39,130	42.1%	21.8%	32.1%	75.2%	10.8%	18.6%	21.2%
Encore	1,559 (4.0%)	16.8%	4.6%	70.1%	22.5%	5.4%	0.5%	1.9%
Middle								
Total	21,205	45.0%	19.6%	30.8%	75.5%	13.6%	8.1%	11.2%
Encore	1,343 (6.3%)	20.3%	6.4%	64.7%	33.0%	4.4%	0.0%	0.2%

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Department of Research, Assessment and Evaluation, April 2014.
Note: Schools with elementary and middle or middle and high, or elementary-middle-high were not included in the analysis.
*Data for 2013-2014 is up to January 31, 2014.

While the gifted program has addressed several of the audit recommendations, it has only partially addressed the issue of under-identification of gifted students who are members of historically under-represented student populations. To cultivate students with a potential for giftedness, the School System first implemented the Building Excellent Thinkers (BET) program for under-represented student populations in Title 1 schools. However, the program was stopped because it lacked structure and was sporadically implemented. It will be replaced in 2014-2015 with the Young Scholars of Nashville program in 15 elementary schools with low numbers of students identified for Encore and high numbers of minority students and students on free and reduced-lunch. The purpose of the Young Scholars of Nashville program is to identify and nurture the academic talents and gifts of high performing students in grades K-2 from historically underrepresented populations who do not qualify for Encore to help prepare them to qualify for gifted services.

However, the Encore program has not expanded or replaced its identification and assessment tools to include nonverbal and "culture fair" or "culture free" assessments proved to be effective in identifying minority students and English Language Learners who are gifted. Nonverbal tests of general ability are designed specifically to measure intelligence independently of language and math skills. Assessments

such as the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test and the Ravens Progressive Matrices can be used together with more traditional tests to identify a wider range of students who are gifted. The Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, for example, measures intelligence in a way that identifies more minority children as well as English Language Learners than traditional tests. The test was administered to children in the Fairfax County Public Schools in Fairfax, Virginia, a district with 160,000 students, resulting in the identification of more gifted minority children who are bilingual than would have been considered for their gifted program if only their verbal and quantitative scores had been used.

RECOMMENDATION 2-D.1

Increase the ethnic and language diversity of the Encore program by including assessments that are effective in the identification of gifted students from under-represented populations.

The School System's Encore program should identify assessments that have been proved effective in identifying gifted minority students and English Language Learners and incorporate these assessments in the identification process.

The gifted program coordinator should perform the following:

- review and select one or more assessments proved effective in identifying gifted minority students and English Language Learners;

- develop a plan on test rollout and administration determining the number of schools, grade levels, and students to be tested;

- train Encore teachers in administering the test and interpreting test results and administer the assessments in combination with those currently being used;

- publicize the use of the assessments and encourage nominations from parents of minority students and English Language Learners; and

- track changes in the composition of the gifted population, documenting any increases in the number and performance of students from under-represented populations.

The assessment can be rolled out in phases by grade level. For example, during the first year, the assessment can be administered in Kindergarten and Grade 1, in the second year in Grades 2 and 3, and in the third year in Grades 4, 5, and 6. In following years, the School System will assess new English Language Learners in Kindergarten through Grade 6. The School System also has to determine whether all English Language Learners in the respective grades should be tested or only those who are nominated by their teachers and parents.

FISCAL IMPACT

Costs associated with the purchasing of the assessment materials vary by the assessment the School System will select. For example, Nagliari Nonverbal Ability Test materials to be purchased include the following:

- consumable/machine scorable test packs (consisting 10 tests) for students in Grades K-1 (levels A-B);

- reusable test packs (consisting of 10 tests) for students in Grades 2 to 6 (levels C-E);

- answer documents (pack of 30) associated with the reusable test packs;

- directions for administering the test (1 per administrator); and

- hand scoring guides for each level.

The most conservative assumption is that all English Language Learners in Kindergarten through Grade 6 will be tested. The School System will incur the following material purchasing costs based on January 2014 English Language Learners enrollment data:

The School System has 1,836 Kindergarten and 1,356 Grade 1 English Language Learners, or a total of 3,192 English Language Learners. The School System will purchase 319 test packs @$56.00/pack, totaling $17,864; assume the purchase of 50 directions for administrators @$20 each, totaling $1,000; and assume 50 hand scoring guides @$85.00, totaling $4,250. Estimated costs for test materials for Kindergarten and Grade 1 are $23,114.

The School System has 900 English Language Learners in Grade 2 and 639 in Grade 3 for a total of 1,539. The School System will purchase 154 reusable test packs @$46.00/pack, totaling $7,084; 52 packs of answer documents (pack of 30) that are required with reusable test packs costing $50.00/pack totaling $2,600; assume 30 directions for administrators @$20 each, totaling $600; and assume 30 hand scoring guides @$85.00, totaling $2,550. Estimated costs for test materials for Grades 2 and 3 are $12,834.

The School System has 663 English Language Learners in Grade 4, 478 in Grade 5, and 424 in Grade 6 for a total of 1,565. The School System will purchase 156 reusable test packs @$46.00/pack, totaling $7,176; 52 packs of answer documents (pack of 30) that are required with reusable test packs costing $50.00/pack totaling $2,600; assume 30 directions for administrators @$20 each, totaling $600; and assume 30 hand scoring guides @$85.00, totaling $2,550. Estimated costs for test materials for Grades 4, 5, and 6 are $12,926.

Following the three-year rollout, the School System will test only new students as they enroll. Assuming that the English Language Learners population will grow at five percent a year, test materials will only have to be purchased for students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 as the test materials for all other grades are reusable. Only consumable test packs will have to be purchased as test administrators will have the directions and the hand scoring guides. At the assumed growth level, the School System will enroll 160 new English Language Learners in Kindergarten and Grade 1 per year. Estimated costs include 16 test packs @$56.00/pack totaling $896.

As the materials include directions for administering the test and a hand scoring guide, any additional training of Encore teachers can be incorporated into the annual professional development of these teachers.

SPECIAL EDUCATION INTERVENTION PROCESS
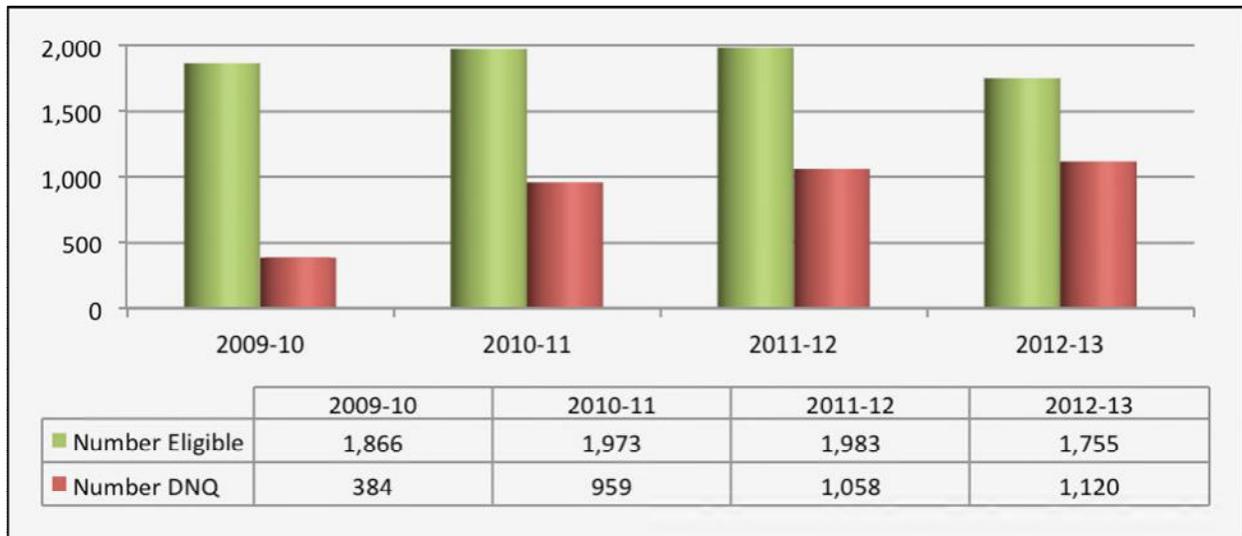
OBSERVATION 2-E

The intervention process used by the School System to assist students with academic, behavioral, social-emotional, or health issues has resulted in a high percentage of referrals for special education services that do not qualify.

The School System uses a multi-step, highly-structured and documented process to refer students with academic, behavioral, social-emotional, or health issues to a school-based support team composed of teachers, other professional staff, parents, and agency representatives. Coordination is provided by a central office coordinator.

Before a student can be referred to a support team, the teacher is required to conduct a teacher-parent conference to discuss the challenges the student is facing and the interventions the teacher is proposing. If the interventions prove ineffective, the teacher convenes a conference with the parent and all teachers serving the student for the purpose of developing additional interventions. If these interventions are not effective in addressing the identified concerns, the teacher submits a referral to the support team chair with all documentation. The teacher completes, within 10 days, the additional information and provides the records the support team chair requested on the student. A support team meeting is scheduled with the teacher and parent within 10 days after all required documentation has been provided. Based on the documentation, the support team determines the appropriate types of interventions and develops an implementation plan for the student in conjunction with the parent, principal or designee, general and exceptional education teachers, a school counselor, an assessment specialist, and the student. The implementation plan specifies the accommodations and interventions to be implemented, identifies the person(s) responsible, and describes expected progress and outcomes at predetermined dates. The team assigns one of its members as a monitor to ensure that the intervention plan is implemented with fidelity. All support team meetings are documented and progress is tracked. While the primary purpose of the support team process is to identify resources and support a student may need to succeed in school, if the interventions are not effective or if a disability is suspected, this process is also used as a referral source for a comprehensive evaluation for a disability and, as pertinent, for special education services.

Although the support team process the School System uses is highly-structured to ensure consistency in implementation, it has resulted in a high percentage of referrals that do not qualify for special education services. Between 2009-2010 and 2012-2013, the number of referrals to special education increased 27.7 percent while non-qualifying referrals as a percent of total referrals more than doubled from 17.1 percent in 2009-2010 to 39.0 percent in 2012-2013 as shown in **Exhibit 2-40**.

Exhibit 2-40
Number and Percentage of Referrals to Special Education
2009-2010 through 2012-2013

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
■ Number Eligible	1,866	1,973	1,983	1,755
■ Number DNQ	384	959	1,058	1,120

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of Exceptional Education, February 2014.

School districts often use data on the outcomes of the support team's referral process as an indicator of the fidelity of process implementation. The School System has not evaluated the support team's referral process nor conducted any analyses of non-qualifying referrals. While the evaluation of its special education services commissioned by the School System in 2012 focused on inclusion and services to special education students, it did not address the referral processes, of which support team referrals are one source. While no school was identified as having a disproportionate number of referrals to special education or a large number of referrals that did not qualify, there is a lack of information on whether referrals that did not qualify are associated with specific suspected disabilities. In addition, there is no information on any other factors contributing to the increased number of referrals that do not qualify, such as, quality of monitoring the implementation of the intervention plan, teacher's differentiated instruction, or the intensity, frequency, and duration of the interventions. As the evaluation of students for special education is a resource intensive and costly process, reducing the number of referrals that do not qualify will be economically advantageous.

RECOMMENDATION 2-E.1.

Evaluate the intervention process to identify factors contributing to the large number of non-qualifying referrals for special education services.

The Executive Director of the Office of Exceptional Education should do these things:

- Analyze the data contained in the support team's referral folders to identify the factors that differentiate between qualifying and non-qualifying referrals. Use the results of the analysis to review the referral process and determine what changes should be introduced to reduce the number of ineligible referrals and incorporate the changes into the referral process.

- Provide training for the support teams and other appropriate staff regarding any changes to be made to the referral process.

- Track all non-qualifying referrals and use the findings to refine the process.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

OBSERVATION 2-F

The scope and quality of services provided by the School System's Guidance and Counseling program is affected by the extent to which non-counseling responsibilities are assigned to the counselors.

The American School Counselor Association's National Model recommends that counselors spend 80 percent or more of their time in direct and indirect services to students. Direct student services are defined as in-person interactions between school counselors and students and include the school counseling core curriculum that is designed to help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills appropriate for their development level; assist students to establish personal goals and develop future plans; and provide responsive services to meet student needs in individual or small group sessions. Indirect services are provided on behalf of the students as a result of counselor interactions with others, such as referral for additional assistance and consultation and collaboration with parents, teachers, and community organizations. In specifying the school counselor's responsibilities, the American School Counselor Association National Model emphasizes that school counselors "cannot be fully effective when they are taken away from essential counseling tasks to perform non-counseling activities." Inappropriate non-counseling activities the American School Counselor Association National Model lists include the following:

- registering, scheduling, and coordinating paperwork and data entry for all new students.

- administering/coordinating cognitive, aptitude, and achievement tests;

- signing excuses for tardy or absent students;

- performing disciplinary actions;

- sending home students who are not appropriately dressed;

- reaching classes when teachers are absent;

- computing grade point averages;

- maintaining student records;

- supervising classrooms, study halls, or common areas;

- keeping records;

- assisting with duties in the principal's office;

- working with one student at a time in a therapeutic clinical mode; and

- coordinating school-wide individual education plans, study teams, and school attendance review boards.

Utilizing counselors to perform these non-counseling tasks takes them away from "what they do best and what only they can do."

While the School System's Guidance and Counseling program does not have individual counselor data on the time spent on direct and indirect counseling activities and on non-counseling activities, the amount of time counselors are assigned to perform non-counseling duties has the most significant effect on the services counselors provide to students. The amount of time counselors are asked to devote to the performance of non-counseling duties is considered the greatest barrier to providing high quality interventions for students. Even in schools where counselors have smaller caseloads, they do not spend more time helping students than do counselors with larger caseloads because they are being asked to perform a large amount of clerical and administrative tasks. The School System's non-counselor duties include testing coordination and administration, coordinating support teams, administering the Response to Intervention program, paperwork, and scheduling.

RECOMMENDATION 2-F.1

Conduct a time and task analysis of direct services, indirect services, and non-counseling services being provided by counselors to determine how their time is being allocated.

The School System's Guidance and Counseling executive director should perform a detailed analysis of the time counselors spend in direct counseling services, indirect services, and non-counseling activities. The analysis should examine the data by service or activity, caseload, school level, and selected school characteristics such as number and type of discipline problems and discipline consequences, number of students on free or reduced lunch, and attendance rates. The Guidance and Counseling executive director should develop and implement a time-activity data collection system in which each counselor records the time he/she spends daily on listed activities. Data should be recorded for the entire school year as time allocated to specific activities fluctuates throughout the year. The Guidance and Counseling program executive director should train all counselors in the use of the time-activity system and monitor data monthly.

In addition to overall data on all counselors, the analysis will pinpoint time spent on respective non-counseling activities. The analysis should also identify variations in time/activity across school levels, school sizes, and school characteristics. These data can assist the Guidance and Counseling program in refining its job descriptions, negotiating with the School System's administration on assignment of counselors to non-counseling activities both in terms of time and type of activity, realigning the program more closely with the American School Counselor Association model, and refining its counselor evaluation system to account for time utilization in direct and indirect services.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

OBSERVATION 2-G

Current nurse staffing levels in the School System allow it to offer a minimal health services program, leaving a large number of schools without appropriate access to services provided by a school nurse.

The School System's Student Health Services program has a staff of 70 including a director, five supervisors, and 64 nurses that serve its 154 schools as well as two schools that are not in the School System but have the School System's students with health needs as illustrated in **Exhibit 2-41**. All the nurses are Registered Nurses. The School System contracts with the Metropolitan Public Health Department in Nashville and with the Vanderbilt School of Nursing for nurses. One hundred and two or 65.4 percent of the schools have daily scheduled nursing services; however, in 54 or 34.6 percent of the schools nurses visit only to answer questions from school staff or oversee medication delivery.

Exhibit 2-41
Schools and Nursing Services – 2013-2014

	Number	Percent
Total Number of Schools	156*	100.0%
Schools with Daily Scheduled Nursing Services	102**	65.4%
Contact Schools	54	34.6%
Non-Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools with the School System's Students Served by the School System's Nurses	2	1.3%
Schools Served Daily by More than One Nurse	8	5.1%
Schools Served by State Department of Health Nurses	153	98.1%
Schools Served by Nurses from the Vanderbilt School of Nursing	3	1.9%

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 2014.
**Number of schools includes two non-Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools with Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools students who need nursing services.*

While the School System exceeds the Basic Education Program formula of funding one nurse per 3,000 students or 28.3 nurses for a system the size of the Metropolitan Nashville Public School, the program it offers is considered minimal. A minimal program consists of direct skilled nursing services and the development of Individual Health Plans for students with acute or chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, severe allergies, sickle cell, and seizure disorders. The School System has more than 5,000 students with chronic medical conditions that require individual health plans and 92 schools with students requiring daily medical procedures.

The demand for school nursing services has grown nationally. The increase in the number of students with complex and chronic medical conditions, estimated to affect 15 to 18 percent of all students, the lack of health insurance for 9.7 percent of children, and the lack of family access to medical services have resulted in the schools becoming the main source of health care for many students and their families.

Nurses visit between one and five schools daily and may make as many as five or six trips a day between and among schools with multiple trips to a given school depending on students' medical needs. Of the 64 nurses making school visits, 70.3 percent visit two or more schools a day as shown in **Exhibit 2-42**.

Exhibit 2-42
Nurse Distribution – 2013-2014
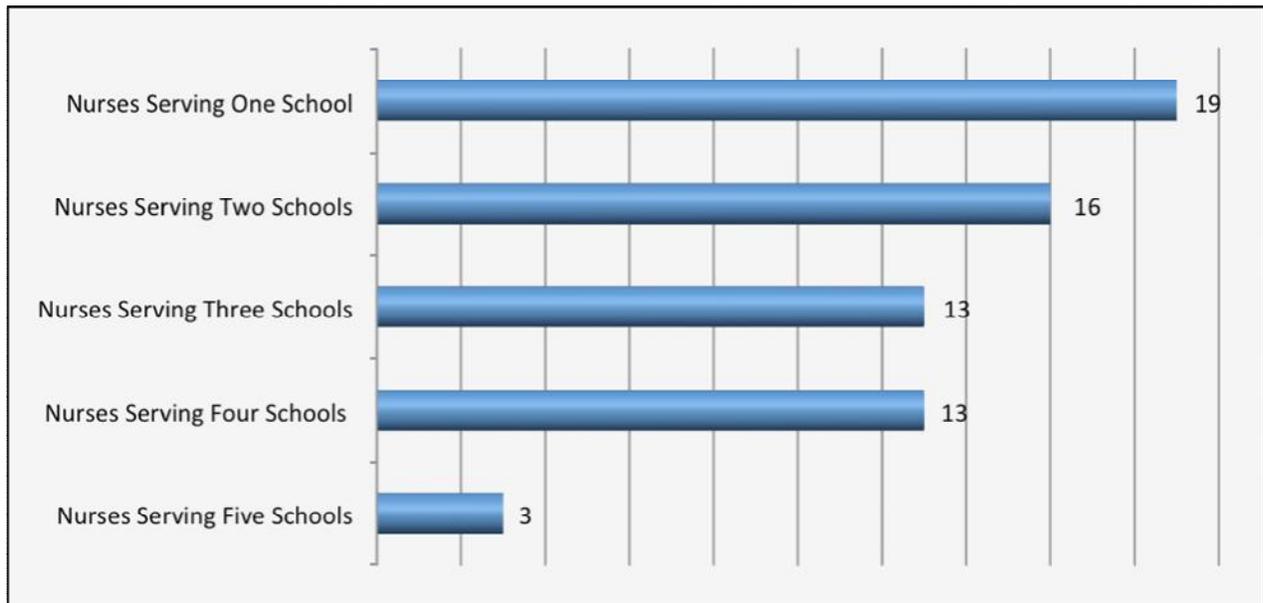
Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of Chief Support Services Officer, February 2014 and School Health Services Program, April 25, 2014.
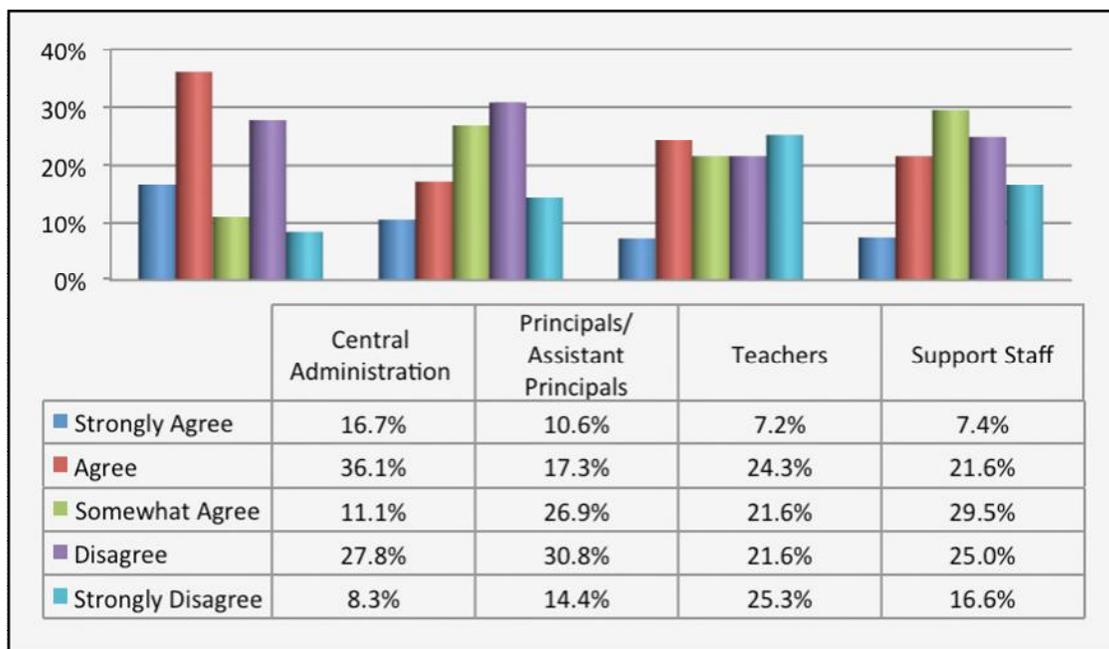
The impact of using nurses in this manner results in the following issuer:

- lack of a fulltime campus presence shifts tasks that nurses typically perform to school personnel such as principals, teachers, secretaries, and aides, taking away time from their normal responsibilities;

- functions such as first aid and dispensation of medications usually performed by nurses cannot be done as efficiently or with the same quality and completeness by school staff; and

- multiple campus assignments and part-time availability minimize the time that nurses can dedicate to:

  – participating on Individualized education plan (IEP) and 504 teams for students with health issues;

  – maintaining students' health records, especially those related to immunizations, and conducting bi-annual competency assessments of students who perform their own invasive procedures in school;

  – developing electronic medical records for the students, verifying doctors' orders, and performing monthly self-assisted medication audits in all schools;

- following up with medical providers and parents whose children have certain medical conditions or need further medical evaluations;

- educating teachers and staff about specific students' health conditions and emergency plans;

- Engaging in small group or classroom presentations to deliver health education and promote hygiene, healthy eating, and healthy habits;

- meeting the need for parent health education;

- acting as first responders in case of a medical emergency; and

- serving on school emergency response teams or implementing training and drills in preparation for emergencies.

- under-utilization of the Health Office, a system for logging medications and nursing services. For example, due to lack of time on the part of nurses and school staff, student immunization data is not entered into the system. As a result, schools have to maintain paper certificates that are stored with students' educational records.

The perception among staff is that access to school nurses is limited as shown in **Exhibit 2-43**. Only 28 to 32 percent of principals and assistant principals, teachers, and support staff that responded to a survey regarding educational service delivery agreed or strongly agreed that students have access to a school nurse when needed. Approximately 53 percent of those in central administration responded similarly.

Exhibit 2-43
Students Have Access When Needed to a School Nurse*

	Central Administration	Principals/ Assistant Principals	Teachers	Support Staff
■ Strongly Agree	16.7%	10.6%	7.2%	7.4%
■ Agree	36.1%	17.3%	24.3%	21.6%
■ Somewhat Agree	11.1%	26.9%	21.6%	29.5%
■ Disagree	27.8%	30.8%	21.6%	25.0%
■ Strongly Disagree	8.3%	14.4%	25.3%	16.6%

Source: Survey of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, April-May 2014.
**Percentages were recalculated excluding respondents who checked "not applicable."*

Research indicates that not having access to a school nurse or assigning non-nursing school personnel to perform nursing tasks is detrimental to maintaining an effective student health program while having nurses on campuses full-time has multiple benefits associated with student attendance and subsequently with academic achievement and graduation rates. Some of the research findings include the following:

- a 2011 study showed that having a full-time nurse on campus saves a considerable amount of time, estimated at up to 13 hours a day, for principals, teachers, and clerical staff assigned to performing health-related tasks;

- studies conducted in 2005 and 2008 showed that nurses are significantly less likely to dismiss a student from school early than non-licensed personnel; and

- a 2005 study demonstrated that school nurses have a positive impact on immunization rates with fewer parents asking for exemptions and fewer students missing school.

In addition, multiple studies have demonstrated that a lower nurse-to-students ratio is associated with better attendance rates. These studies are supported by the School System's data showing that when a student visits a nurse the overall return-to-class rate is 69 percent. However, in schools with a full-time nurse the rate is higher, ranging from 73 to 89 percent.

The School System has a considerably higher nurse-to-students ratio compared with other Tennessee counties. . A June 2012 survey showed the School System's nurse-to-student ratio to be 1:1,513 compared with ratios ranging from 1:600 to 1:950 in five Tennessee counties as shown in **Exhibit 2-44**. Even with an increase in 2013-2014 in the number of nurses, the nurse-to-students ratio was only lowered to 1:1,275 compared to the recommendation of the National Association of School Nurses of 1:750 for the general student population.

Exhibit 2-44
Nurse-to-Students Ratio in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools and Other Counties – 2012

School District/ System	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools	Hamilton	Rutherford	Williamson	Wilson	Shelby
Number of Schools	134*	77	45	40	18	51
Number of Students	81,712	42,000	39,900	33,000	16,000	47,500
Number of Nurses**	54	70	42	39	18	51
Nurse-to-Students Ratio	1:1,513	1:600	1:950	1:846	1:889	1:931

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Student Health Service Program, April 23, 2014.

*Does not include charter schools but includes two Exceptional Education non-Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

** Does not include supervisory positions.

*** Memphis did not respond to the survey.

Polk County, a peer district, had 97,902 students in 2013-2014 and 127 nurses for a 1:771 nurse-to-students ratio. The School System with a population of 82,863 students and 64 nurses has a ratio of 1:1,295. The nurse-to-students ratio is 68 percent higher than Polk County's ratio.

RECOMMENDATION 2-G.1.

Conduct an operational review of the Students Health Services program to address staffing levels, nurse-to-student ratios, and the allocation of nurses across campuses.

The coordinator of the Students Health Services program should conduct an operational review of the program, jointly with representatives of the Human Capital and the Information Management and Decision Support Departments to determine how the assignment and utilization of nurses can be optimized at different staffing and skill levels.

As part of the program operational overview, the coordinator of Students Health Services should do an analysis of the distribution of students with chronic health conditions who require daily nursing care and classify schools into different categories based on the number of students requiring such care. The coordinator should explore a range of service and staffing options for schools with a very small number of such students and identify the most efficient option.

Currently, the assignment of nurses to schools changes often as the health care needs of a school may change with the presence of a new student with a chronic health condition. Having a highly mobile student population requires frequent scheduling changes in assigning nurses to schools. The operational review should examine alternatives for addressing changes in nurse allocations throughout the year as the health care needs of a school may change due to students with chronic health conditions moving to different schools.

The operational review should also examine the extent and effectiveness with which technology is used in the program and determine whether additional aspects of the program, such as individual health plans, can be automated. Following automation, the efficiency of the programs used should be tracked.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PERFORMANCE CHALLENGES

OBSERVATION 2-H

While the School System has made improvements in its English Language Learners program, its program is still facing instructional and student performance challenges.

The School System has a large student population whose English language proficiency is classified as either no English language background or limited English proficiency (LEP). It has students from 120 countries speaking as many different languages and dialects. In 2013-2014, 22,092 students or 26.7 percent of the total student population had no English language background. From 2009-2010 through February 2014, the percentage of students with no English language background grew 38.1 percent. Over the same period, the percentage of students with limited English proficiency increased 22.2 percent, and those designated as English Language Learners increased 29.2 percent. The total student population increased 16.3 percent over the same period as shown in **Exhibit 2-45**.

Exhibit 2-45
Number and Percentage of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Students with No English Language Background, Limited English Proficiency and English Language Learners – 2009-2010 to 2013-2014**

Year	Total Number of Students*	Number of Students in Program	Annual Change in Number of Students in Program	Percent of Total Number of Students in System
No English Language Background				
2009-2010	71,228	15,994		22.5%
2010-2011	72,449	16,339	2.2%	22.6%
2011-2012	74,563	18,578	13.7%	24.9%
2012-2013	76,551	20,468	10.2%	26.7%
2013-2014	82,863	22,092	7.9%	26.7%
Limited English Proficiency				
2009-2010	71,228	10,166		14.3%
2010-2011	72,449	10,763	5.9%	14.9%
2011-2012	74,563	11,205	4.1%	15.0%
2012-2013	76,551	11,861	10.2%	15.5%
2013-2014	82,863	12,420	4.7%	15.0%
English Language Learners				
2009-2010	71,228	8,089		11.4%
2010-2011	72,449	8,385	3.7%	11.6%
2011-2012	74,563	8,751	4.4%	11.7%
2012-2013	76,551	9,286	6.1%	12.1%
2013-2014	82,863	10,448	12.5%	12.6%

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of English Learners, February 2014.
*Total number of students in 2009-2010 to 2012-2013 is based on Membership; total number of students in 2013-2014 is Enrollment.
**Data for 2013-2014 is up to January 31, 2014.

The School System has a mixed track record with regard to meeting the Tennessee English Language Program Accountability Standards under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The three accountability standards, called the Annual Measurable Annual Objectives, are:

- Annual Measurable Annual Objective 1: the percent of limited English proficient students who show progress on the state language proficiency exam. (The School System met the target in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 but not in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.)

- Annual Measurable Annual Objective 2: the percent of limited English proficient students who exited Limited English Proficiency (LEP) status and the English Learners program by meeting the exit criteria on the state language proficiency exam. (The School System met the target in 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2011-2012- but not in 2012-2013.)

- Annual Measurable Annual Objective 3: whether the district met accountability standards for the Limited English Proficiency subgroup based on results from the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program and End Of Course exams. (The School System met the standard in 2011-2012 but not in 2009-2010, 2010-2011 and 2012-2013.)

The last year in which the School System met all three Annual Measurable Annual Objectives was 2008-09. In 2012-2013, it failed to meet all three Annual Measurable Annual Objectives. Its performance on the Annual Measurable Annual Objectives 1 and 2 was the second lowest among all districts funded under Title III in 2011-2012 and was lower in 2012-2013 than it was in 2009-2010.

The English Language Learners program was externally evaluated in 2010 to determine whether and how effectively the School System implemented its agreement with the Office of Civil Rights regarding the instruction and integration of students with limited English proficiency. Previously, the School System placed students with limited English proficiency in self-contained classrooms for four years. Under a compliance agreement with the Office of Civil Rights, the School System was authorized to implement a program that would not segregate limited proficiency students for the entire school day and that these students "would not remain in segregated structured immersion classes for more than one school year in most cases and no more than two school years ever." The School System also agreed to provide the necessary language support to students transitioning to general education to help them attain academic proficiency.

The 2010 evaluation was based on a framework the evaluators developed to guide schools and districts in assessing their programs for English Language Learners and promote program excellence through high expectations, development of full English proficiency, the teaching of challenging core content, providing appropriate instruction, using valid assessments, and sharing responsibility with the general education program. According to this framework an effective English Language Learners program is characterized as "enriched, academically challenging, long-term, and integrated with programs for native English speakers."

The purpose of the evaluation was to examine the extent to which these principles were in place and to provide guidance to ensure the School System is implementing an effective program for English Language Learners. It concluded that while progress had been made from 2006 to 2009, it had not met all of its goals for its English Language Learners. Although systems of support had been established, improvement was needed in all categories related to effective practice. The greatest need was associated with the implementation of high academic standards for English Language Learners. The evaluation contained three key recommendations:

- transform the School System's English Language Learner program from a segregated, remedial approach to an integrated, enriched approach to educating students;

- ensure that all teachers of English Language Learners are prepared to support high academic achievement for these students; and

- hold all school personnel accountable for improving teaching and learning for English Language Learners.

Since the report was issued, the English Language Learners program has gone through considerable changes related to the structure, curriculum, staffing allocation guidelines, professional development, and monitoring strategies as outlined in **Exhibit 2-46**.

Exhibit 2-46
Office of English Language Learners Implementation of Recommendations in the 2010 Appraisal of the English Language Learner Program

Recommendation	Actions Taken*
Transform the School System's English Language Learner program from a segregated, remedial approach to an integrated, enriched approach to educating students. The School System has moved to fully integrate English Language Learners into general education classes. The School System, in 2013-2014, implemented a structured immersion program to meet English Language Learner needs at different proficiency levels.	
Break down district silos so that English Language Learners are a shared responsibility of all district leaders and offices.	Office of English Learners executives and staff participate in system initiatives, committees, and work with other departments and offices.
Involve all stakeholders in setting English Language Learners program goals.	In process: Office of English Learners has begun to set up community meetings and English Language Development teacher and principal committees, and jointly with other departments form an Executive Council to work on English Learner procedures.
Articulate a vision and goals based on an enriched approach to educating all students.	Established, in November 2013, a structured immersion program to meet English Language Learner needs at different proficiency levels. The State approved the plan. Made presentations to system leaders and principals in December 2013 about the program. Provides Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol training, coaching, and mentoring for general education teachers.
Require that specific goals for English Language Learners are included in school improvement plans.	Each school using the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol has an implementation plan. Some schools included the plan in their school improvement plan.
Improve the English Language Learners curriculum to support high expectations for language development as well as cognitive and academic growth.	The English Language Development curriculum team aligned the state English Language Development standards to Common Core English Language Arts standards. The team created a teacher report to communicate the language progress of English Learners.

Exhibit 2-46
Office of English Language Learners Implementation of Recommendations in the 2010 Appraisal of the English Language Learner Program (Cont'd)

Recommendation	Actions Taken*
Ensure the sheltered instructional approach is inclusive of all the components of effective practice supported by research	The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol the program uses has a strong empirical research base showing that it can improve the academic literacy of English Learners.
Support the full integration of English Language Learners in all academic and extra-curricular programs.	Since November 2013, English as Second Language services are provided across all school levels tailored to the students' proficiency level in accordance with state program policy. Services are provided through four service delivery models, based on the number of English learners in a school and the students' proficiency levels.
Provide appropriate resources, materials, and guidance to support grade-level content instruction.	The Office of English Learners is creating an advisory committee to help provide appropriate resources, materials, and guidance. It has also offered lesson plan formats to help teachers differentiate. At the school level, teachers of English Language Learners and general education teachers meet to discuss resources and materials to support grade-level instruction.
Establish appropriate policies and procedures for identifying English Language Learners with special needs.	The Office of English Learners has revised its policies and procedures for identifying, referring, and assessing students with disabilities who are English Learners. It is also planning in 2014-2015 to use different assessments to identify English Learners who are gifted and talented for the Encore and the Young Scholars of Nashville programs.
Ensure current and former English Language Learners have access to honors, advanced placement, and the necessary coursework that prepares them for college and the workplace.	The School System is considering offering advanced placement courses in other languages.
Ensure that all teachers of English Language Learners are prepared to support high academic achievement for these students	
Hire sufficient numbers of content teachers qualified to serve English Language Learners.	The School System has 745 teachers who are English as a Second Language certified. The English Learners Office has trained more than 1,830 teachers in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol strategies. Using Race to the Top funds in 2011 through 2013-2014, the Office enrolled 352 teachers in Lipscomb University to obtain an English as a Second Language endorsement. It also provided professional development to 136 secondary teachers in preparation for the English as a Second Language portion of the Praxis.
Review the formula for determining class size.	The English Language Development Curriculum team developed staffing formulas for English Learners for all school levels.

Exhibit 2-46
Office of English Language Learners Implementation of Recommendations in the 2010 Appraisal of the English Language Learner Program (Cont'd)

Recommendation	Actions Taken*
In schools with significant numbers of English Language Learners, require all teachers to obtain an English as a Second Language endorsement.	Using Race to the Top funds, the School System partnered with Lipscomb University and Belmont University to offer English as a Second Language endorsement courses at no cost to teachers.
Require all teachers of English Language Learners to participate in school- and/or district-based professional development.	Information on professional development on English Learners' issues is input into the School System's professional development system. The Office of English Learners also tracks attendance in all English Learners professional development in schools and systemwide. Schools participating in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol receive professional development and follow-up support either on campus or systemwide.
Prepare all teachers to implement a challenging and academically enriched approach to instruction for English Language Learners.	The English Language Development coaches reinforce the importance of teaching grade level content while providing language instruction through the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol. It provides a framework for language instruction while teaching the content for lesson planning and for the delivery of effective English Learners instruction.
Provide school-based coaching and mentoring.	The School System employed eight English Language Development coaches in August 2011 to support teachers who have English Learners through professional development and assist with program implementation. Each of the coaches was assigned to two clusters and to 10-15 schools within a cluster. In 2014 the coaches were reassigned to schools with the highest English Learners population working with the English Language Development Curriculum director, coordinators and specialists.
Support the formation of collaborative professional learning communities at school and district levels.	Multiple collaborative efforts are implemented from co-teaching to team and cross-department meetings of teachers and coaches. For example, the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol team meets with grade level teams during common planning time to implement the protocol's instructional components. In monthly meetings, English Learner representatives from different schools share information and complete book studies. English Learner coaches and data coaches collaborate in reviewing student work and data, identify areas for improvement, and plan next steps.
Hold all district and school personnel accountable for improving teaching and learning for English Language Learners.	
Improve the system for using data to inform English Language Learners instruction.	The Data Warehouse integrated data on English Learners so that teachers can access the data to review progress. The Data Warehouse plans to include data on prior schooling by 2015.

Exhibit 2-46
Office of English Language Learners Implementation of Recommendations in the 2010 Appraisal of the English Language Learner Program (Cont'd)

Recommendation	Actions Taken*
Train district leaders, school administrators, and teachers how to use the system to access English Language Learners data and to analyze these data to improve instructional programs.	Collaboration with the Federal Programs Office began in December 2013. The Federal Programs Office trained schools on using the data system to access English Language Learners data.
Prepare school administrators with the training and tools to understand effective instructional programs for English Language Learners.	The Office aligned the Walk-Through for principals with the latest standards. A new web site is being created to make information on the program more easily available. The Office will offer webinars and blackboard courses. Each principal will receive a guide on the program. At the elementary level, the Office started to create collaborative cohorts of principals for information sharing and professional development regarding the English Learner program.
Monitor instruction and learning in all classrooms that have English Language Learners.	Coaches monitor instruction and English Learner strategies in schools with a large number of English Learners. In 2013-2014, principals received a special Walk-Through form with a check list of strategies for observation. The Office also worked with the Data Warehouse to add reports that meet teacher needs.
Create a system for ongoing evaluation and improvement of the English Language Learners program.	There is no annual program evaluation in place. The Office plans to develop an evaluation system with the Executive Council.

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of English Learners, Response to the 2010 Appraisal of the English Language Learner Program in the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Conclusions and Recommendation, April 9, 2014.
*The Implementation column highlights the main implementation activities.

As the rates of proficiency, program completion, and performance on state tests have not improved, the School System plans an evaluation in 2014 to determine the extent to which and how well the recommendations of the 2010 study have been implemented, the impact of program changes on student performance, and the effectiveness of the current program practices at the classroom, school, and systemwide levels.

RECOMMENDATION 2-H.1.

Implement the 2014 program evaluation, identifying areas where improvement is needed and develop an implementation and evaluation plan.

The 2014 evaluation should determine the fidelity and effectiveness with which program changes have been implemented, the preparedness and qualifications of the English Language Development and general education teachers, the rigor and quality of how both language and content instruction is being delivered, and the effectiveness of the monitoring process.

Based on the evaluation results, the Office of English Learners executive director, director of English Language Development Curriculum, and the English Language Development coordinators should do the following:

- prepare an operational program improvement plan, specifying what changes or improvements need to be made, steps and strategies for implementing the changes, person(s) responsible, resources needed/allocated, timeline, and expected outcomes;

- develop a monitoring process aligned with the program improvement plan consisting of monitoring tools and reports;

- conduct annual evaluations to assess students' language proficiency progress, program completion rates, and performance on state tests; and

- update the operational improvement plan and the monitoring process, as needed, based on the annual evaluation results.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

LIBRARY/MEDIA COLLECTION

OBSERVATION 2-I

Seventy-five percent of the School System's high school libraries do not meet the state collection size standard.

Tennessee's minimum requirement for public school library collection is an "average of at least 12 items per student in average daily membership." The library collections of 12 of the 16 high schools do not meet this standard. The number of items per student ranges from 8.82 at Antioch High School to 20.48 items per student at Pearl-Cohn High Magnet. Seven of the high school libraries have fewer than 10 items per student, as shown in **Exhibit 2-47**. One factor accounting for the small collections is libraries' space limits. Seven of the high school libraries, according to the lead librarian, do not have the physical space to expand their collections.

To increase their library offerings, the School System's middle and high schools participate in Limitless Libraries in partnership with the Nashville Public Library. The School System can only include the items that Limitless Libraries specifically purchased for the schools using the set amount of $7,000 per school in their 'items per student' calculation. The 'items per student' data presented in **Exhibit 2-47** includes these items; however, the School System cannot include any other Limitless libraries items in their 'items per student' calculation due to several reasons. The Nashville Public Library's policy considers Limitless Libraries a supplemental and not a supplantal program; the items are not on the school site; and the program is not open to all students, only to students who have a Nashville Public Library card and who are in good standing with the public library.

Exhibit 2-47
High School Libraries Collection Size and Items per Student

School	Collection Size	Average Daily Membership	Number of Items per Student	Number of items Needed to Meet Standard
Antioch High	16,978	1,926	8.82	6,134
Cane Ridge High	15,495	1,641	9.44	4,197
East Magnet School (High)	6,507	733	8.88	2,289
Glencliff High	12,925	1,418	9.11	4,091
Hillsboro High	13,806	1,208	11.43	690
Hillwood High	12,394	1,187	10.44	1,850
Hume-Fogg High Magnet	8,505	928	9.16	2,631
Hunters Lane High	14,389	1,587	9.07	4,665
King High Magnet	12,060	1,198	10.07	2,316
Maplewood High	13,921	836	16.65	0
McGavock High	31,951	2,207	14.48	0
Nashville School of the Arts	6,228	654	9.52	1,620
Overton High	17,563	1,732	10.14	3,221
Pearl-Cohn High Magnet	15,569	760	20.48	0
Stratford High	9,408	619	15.19	0
Whites Creek High	9,048	788	11.48	408
Total	**216,747**	**19,422**	**11.20**	**34,102**

Source: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools, Office of Learning Technology and Library Services, May 2014.

Research has shown that a large and up-to-date collection of print and electronic resources, in addition to having certified librarians and aides, incremental increases in funding, and student usage of the library, lead to incremental gains in student learning and performance.

RECOMMENDATION 2-I.1.

Increase all high school library collections to 12 items per student to meet the state minimum standard.

To increase library collections to the minimum state standard of 12 items per student, the high school library collections will have to be supplemented by 34,102 items. At an average 2013 cost of $20.82 per book, this will require an investment of $710,004 without factoring any increases in the current cost of books beyond 2014. The School System can increase its high school library collections over a period of five years at a cost of $142,001 per year. The lead librarian, jointly with the high school librarians, should analyze the current collections with regard to age and subject area and develop a set of priorities reflecting the areas where collections are weak or aged and give priority to libraries with the lowest number of items per student. The lead librarian should develop an annual list of books and other items to be acquired based on the analysis and the priorities developed.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY

	RECOMMENDATION	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	TOTAL 5-YEAR (COSTS) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
	CHAPTER 3: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY							
2-A.1	Develop a plan for reducing the concentrations of high-poverty populations in existing K-8 magnet schools.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2-B.1	Identify and implement behavior management strategies that have been proven effective in reducing the need for disciplinary actions for all students and in reducing racial disparities in discipline.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2-C.1	Implement behavior management strategies that have been proved effective in reducing racial disparities in discipline, especially those associated with placement in disciplinary alternative education settings.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2-D.1	Increase the ethnic and language diversity of the ENCORE program by including assessments that are effective in the identification of gifted students from underrepresented populations.	($23,114)	($12,834)	($12,926)	($896)	($896)	($50,666)	$0
2-E.1	Evaluate the intervention process to identify factors contributing to the large number of non-qualifying referrals for special education services.	$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) OR SAVINGS	ONE TIME (COSTS) OR SAVINGS
CHAPTER 3: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY							
2-F.1	Conduct a time and task analysis of direct services, indirect services, and non-counseling services being provided by counselors to determine how their time is being allocated.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2-G.1	Conduct an operational review of the Students Health Services program to address staffing levels, nurse-to-student ratios, and the allocation of nurses across campuses.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2-H.1	Implement the 2014 program evaluation, identifying areas where improvement is needed and develop an implementation and evaluation plan.	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
2-I.1	Increase all high school library collection to 12 items per student to meet the state minimum standard.	($142,001)	($142,001)	($142,001)	($142,001)	($142,001)	($710,005)	$0
TOTALS-CHAPTER 2		**($165,115)**	**($154,835)**	**($154,927)**	**($142,897)**	**($142,897)**	**($760,671)**	**$0**

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
Management of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools should:			
2-A.1	Develop a plan for reducing the concentrations of high-poverty populations in existing K-8 magnet schools.	**Partially Accept** The district recognizes that in some K-8 magnet programs there are high concentrations of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. However, the magnet school enrollment process is based on student and parent choice. The district added a recruiter in fall 2014 to assist schools in East Nashville and model Pre-K centers in their recruiting efforts. Beginning in the fall of 2015, the recruiter will also work with magnet schools.	Recruiter Hired: October 2014 Recruitment Efforts Ongoing
2-B.1	Identify and implement behavior management strategies that have been proven effective in reducing the need for disciplinary actions for all students and in reducing racial disparities in discipline.	**Accept** The district was selected to participate in PASSAGE (Positive and Safe Schools Advancing Greater Equity) in the summer of 2014. PASSAGE is an initiative being conducted by the Annenberg Institute that focuses on the reduction of discipline disparities. The district is currently modifying its student Code of Conduct and disciplinary practices to address this issue. In addition to PASSAGE, the district is utilizing the community school model to work with community agencies to identify partners and programs that have the ability to work with schools and students to address student behavior and the need for additional social and emotional support.	Summer 2015 Progress Monitoring Ongoing
2-C.1	Implement behavior management strategies that have been proved effective in reducing racial disparities in discipline, especially those associated with placement in disciplinary alternative education settings.	**Accept** In addition to the response to 2-B.1, the district has adopted the use of restorative practices to reduce suspensions and expulsions. In addition, the "Why Try" program will be expanded to include elementary and high school students in need of additional services and intervention. The district recognizes the need exists for a progressive discipline plan and is working with the state Department of Education to review and revise discipline codes and severity indexes.	Summer 2015

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
2-D.1	Increase the ethnic and language diversity of the ENCORE program by including assessments that are effective in the identification of gifted students from underrepresented populations.	**Accept** Beginning in fall 2014, CogAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) Form 7 (updated from Form 6) was administered to all qualifying students. Research studies show that CogAT Form 7 is more effective in identifying students from under-represented groups, such as students with limited English proficiency. In the 2015-16 school year, the HOPE Scale will be used as a screener for the identification of K-1 gifted and talented students. The HOPE Scale is a useful measure to identify students from low-income families and minority backgrounds. In the spring of 2016, after a review of the impact of these new measures on the composition of Encore participation, the use of alternate assessments (i.e., Naglieri, Ravens) will be considered for subsequent years. Additionally, the use of local/school norms may be used to identify gifted/talented students in certain schools that have had historically low participation in Encore.	2015-2016; further review for 2016-2017
2-E.1	Evaluate the intervention process to identify factors contributing to the large number of non-qualifying referrals for special education services.	**Accept** S-Team (Support Team) training has been revised to reflect the State Response to Intervention and Instruction Model (RTI 2 - 11/2014) and is currently being rolled out district-wide. Non qualifying referrals are being tracked for state indicators. During the 2009-2010 school year, MNPS was utilizing a new data system and data quality was not as consistent as it is now. The district will continue to use data to refine the S-Team process. It is important to note that not all referrals for special education go through an S-team process. Additionally, MNPS has a legal obligation to honor parent requests for assessments, whether or not district employees suspect a disability.	Ongoing through 2015-2016
2-F.1	Conduct a time and task analysis of direct services, indirect services, and non-counseling services being provided by	**Accept** The Executive Director for School Counseling will create a survey	May 2015

	Recommendation	Concurrence and Corrective Action Plan	Proposed Completion Date
	counselors to determine how their time is being allocated.	instrument for school counselors to gather data on tasks. The survey will be administered in late February 2015 and the final report will be submitted to the Chief Academic Officer in May.	
2-G.1	Conduct an operational review of the Students Health Services program to address staffing levels, nurse-to-student ratios, and the allocation of nurses across campuses.	**Partially Accept** The district currently conducts an annual operational review. This process is conducted in partnership with the Metropolitan Nashville Health Department and evaluates program implementation, performance and staffing. As a result of this process, five additional nurses were added in the fall of 2014. All schools currently have nursing services and MNPS continues to evaluate the need for additional services.	Operational Review conducted annually
2-H.1	Implement the 2014 program evaluation, identifying areas where improvement is needed and develop an implementation and evaluation plan.	**Reject** As stated in 2-G.1, the district currently provides nursing services for all schools and a process exists to evaluate program effectiveness and the need for additional services. Implementation of this recommendation would result in a significant budget increase in student health services.	N/A
2-I.1	Increase all high school library collection to the 12 items per student to meet the state minimum standard.	**Accept** The office of school librarians will submit the cost to fully fund the high school library collections in the FY15-16 budget.	January 2016