



# Children First!

News & Information from Metro Nashville Public Schools

---

## May 23, 2008

*In this edition:* *Public Forum on MNPS Special Education Services*  
*Law Week a Huge Success*  
*MNPS Strengthening Middle School Curriculum for 2008*  
*Cole Elementary Grand Slams Reading*  
*Three MNPS Schools Named to Newsweek Top Schools List*  
*MNPS Custodians Honored for Hard Work*  
*Maplewood Students Win Big at Autoshop Appreciation Day*  
*Community Education Registration for Summer 2008 is Open*  
*MLK Senior Wins Principal's Leadership Award Scholarship*  
*Gower Elementary Hosts Summer Music Program*  
*COPLA Graduation Celebration*  
*Middle College Students Collect Many Credits*  
*800 MNPS Students Will Go To CMA Fan Festival – For Free*  
*Taylor Stratton Gets a Playground Grant*  
*Música de le Gente --- Music of the People Festival*

### **Public Forum on MNPS Special Education Services**

Tuesday, May 27, from 6 – 7 p.m., **Mayor Karl Dean's Advisory Council** will hold the first of three public forums on special education. Registration for the forum begins at 5:30 p.m. The purpose of the forum is to gather the perspectives of interested families and community members. The forum will be held in the Arts & Crafts Room at Hadley Park Community Center, 1037 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue North (enter from the front door, and the Arts and Crafts room will be the last door on the right).

Two other forums will be held later in the summer. The second is scheduled for June 9, 6 – 7 p.m., at the East Park Community Center, 700 Woodland Street, in the Arts & Crafts Room. The last forum will be held June 23, from 6 – 7 p.m., at the Woodbine Community Center, 222 Oriol Avenue, in the downstairs classroom.

The Mayor will host a town hall meeting on special education Monday, July 14, from 6 – 7 p.m. The location is to be determined.

### **Law Week a Huge Success**

Each year, the Young Lawyers Division of the Nashville Bar Association sponsors an art and essay competition for Davidson County students as part of **Law Week**. The art competition is open to students in grades K-8, while the essay contest is open to students in grades 9-12.

The theme for this 50th Law Week competition, set by the American Bar Association, was: "The Rule of Law: Foundations for Communities of Opportunity and Equity." Each student submitting artwork was required to incorporate the theme into his or her artwork or essay.

In the hard-fought art competition, the following students were awarded prizes:

1st place - Ryan Elmerick - Julia Green Elementary School - Leshia Bess' 4th Grade classroom;  
2nd place - Xiuya Yao - Julia Green Elementary School - Leshia Bess' 4th Grade classroom;  
3rd place - Jerimey Pullen - Buena Vista Enhanced Option School - Joi Mitchell's 4th Grade classroom.

Ryan Elmerick went on to win 2nd place in the statewide competition.

With regard to the essay competition, all three winners were from Nancy's Schwartz's class at Martin Luther King Academic Magnet School. The winners are: 1st place: Makeshia Welch; 2nd place: Andrea Rock; and 3rd place: Missy La Vone.

All students who placed in the competition, as well as their teachers, were awarded gift cards to Target on White Bridge Road and donut parties from Fox's Donut Den in Green Hills. Congratulations to all of the students who placed and their teachers.

The Young Lawyers Division of the Nashville Bar Association would like to thank the sponsors for making this year's competition a rewarding experience for everyone.

### **MNPS strengthening middle school curriculum for 2008**

Middle school **language arts and mathematics programs** are currently being reworked to strengthen them in both content and expectations for the 2008 school year and to meet state academic standards, which also are changing and becoming more difficult. With the changes, MNPS will be using differentiated instruction, which allows teachers to assess students and provide tools and instruction to each student at his or her own level. These changes are being made in collaboration with the State Department of Education and come with the recommendation of state staff. The district will keep its Testing for Credit courses in Foreign Language, Algebra I and Physical Science. Preliminary information has been sent to middle school families and additional information will be available as we prepare to start school in August.

### **Cole Elementary School Grand Slammed Reading**

This spring, **Cole Elementary School** joined the Nashville Sounds Reading Club, which encourages students and their teachers to pick up a book for eight straight weeks. The school set a goal of 30,000 books, which required every student and faculty member to read 40 books each. At the end of the eight weeks, the number of books read was totaled, and the students and faculty at Cole read 30,490 books – a grand slam by everyone's standards!

As a reward for their accomplishment, the students and faculty celebrated with a trip to watch the Nashville Sounds and Principal Mildred Nelson awarded the students with a special event, *Cool Treats for Cool Readers*. The "cool treats" included popsicles and a movie. Also for being a Sounds Reading Club member, each student K-4 will receive two books for summer reading. Carnella Mitchell provided the books through the Reading First Grant. The top student readers and number of books read are:

Kindergarten:	Sayda Sloan	140
	Christina Ferrari	105

1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Genetze Leiva	123
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Gaby Mercado	137
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Glen Overstreet	161
	Abigail Risovath	133
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Joanna Rodriguez	138
	Aram Hussein	139
	Yaneli Morena	123
	Onyx Deluna	103

The top faculty and staff readers and number of books read are:

Assistant Principal	Chad High	336
General School Assistant	Beverly Moon	171
Art Teacher	Christine Campbell	161
Title I Interventionist	Lorri Neal	120
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher	Melissa Milam	113

Congratulations to Cole Elementary students and faculty.

### **Three MNPS Schools Named to Newsweek Top Schools List**

For the third consecutive year, **three MNPS high schools** have made the Top 1,200 in America as rated by *Newsweek* magazine's annual survey -- with Martin Luther King Jr. at 23rd, Hume-Fogg at 24th and Hillsboro at 390. MNPS was the only district in Tennessee to have schools in the top 100 on the list.

According to *Newsweek*, the ratings were developed by *Washing Post* Education reporter Jay Mathews and are based on the number of Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) tests takes by all students in a particular school, divided by the number of graduating seniors at that school.

For a complete list of the year's top schools or more information on how schools are selected to the list, visit [www.newsweek.com/id/380](http://www.newsweek.com/id/380).

### **Custodians Honored for Hard Work**

Congratulations to several MNPS custodians for being named Metro's 2008 Custodians of the Year. This year's winners include: David Vanattia, Waverly-Belmont Support Center; Robert Stewart, J.E. Moss Elementary School; James Bryant, Ewing Park Middle School; Harry Porter, Antioch High School; and Donnie Patton, Harris-Hillman Special Education School.

The awards ceremony for the contest was held Monday, May 19, at the East Park Community Center, and each honoree received a beautiful plaque for his hard work. This year, a record number of 19 nominees were recognized for their work caring for school and school-related professional buildings. Two individuals were nominated and honored in last year's contest, and five in 2006.

Names of the 19 individuals, the schools where they work, and the person who nominated them, is all listed on the Metro government website at [www.nashville.gov/beautification](http://www.nashville.gov/beautification).

### **Maplewood Students Win Big at Autoshop Appreciation Day**

**Maplewood High** won first place at a recent Autoshop Appreciation Day held Tuesday, May 6 at Tennessee Speed Sport, event sponsor. The day was filled with fun, friendship, competition and refreshments. Students participated in wheel barrow races, a 1,000 pound tug of war, Canadian skiing and an adult size pedal car run. Maplewood's 13-member team went up against a 60-member team of students from Nashville Auto Diesel College. Prizes and points were awarded in each event, but the Maplewood team took home the trophy for overall winner.

### **Community Education Registration for Summer 2008 is Open**

The **Community Education Center** is now enrolling those interested in taking summer classes. Offerings include: computer classes in Microsoft Excel, Word, PowerPoint and Access; classes in arts and crafts, which include Stained Glass, Handcrafted Home Décor, Handmade Toiletries, and Stamping with Flare; exercise and sports classes which include Latin Cardio, Belly Dancing, VINYASA Yoga and Beginner's Golf; a canine exercise class called Sergeant Gordon's Training Classes (for both puppies and dogs); and classes in cooking, decorating and landscaping.

To download an additional list of classes or to obtain registration information, please visit [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org) <<http://www.mnps.org/>> and select 'Parents and Community' and then 'Community Education.'

### **MLK Senior Wins Principal's Leadership Award Scholarship**

Jessica Ch'ng, a **Martin Luther King Academic Magnet senior** has been named a recipient of a Principal's Leadership Award Scholarship, co-sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and Herff Jones, Inc. One hundred national PLA winners were chosen from among more than 4,500 applications. Each national winner will receive a \$1,000 college scholarship.

Jessica was nominated for the award by her principal, Dr. Schunn Turner. Winners were selected on the basis of their leadership skills, participation in service organizations and clubs, achievements in the arts and sciences, and academic record.

While at Martin Luther King Academic Magnet, Jessica has been student body president, chair of the community service club, and president of the People to People International Club. She has been involved in and organized several service projects. This fall she plans to attend Harvard University to study government. Congratulations, Jessica.

### **Gower Elementary Hosts Summer Music Program**

This summer, **Gower Elementary** will host a summer music program. Any student wanting to explore music is invited to attend a class. All classes will be held at Gower Music Room, 650 Old Hickory Blvd. Classes will be offered each Wednesday, starting June 25 and ending July 30. Courses offered include:

**\*Guitar:** 9 – 10 a.m.; grades 2 – 4; limited to 10 students; cost \$75; taught by a professional guitarist; students must have a quality guitar to practice.

**\*Music Day Camp:** 10 a.m. – noon; grades 1 – 4; \$75; class will explore Orff instruments, boom whackers, harmonicas, drums, recorders, composers, rhythm games and dance; students will need a recorder and harmonica.

**\*Recorder Club:** 1 -1 :30 p.m.; grades 3 – 4; \$25; class is designed for up-coming grades 3-4 to learn basic skills that are required by Metro Schools; students will need a recorder.

**\*Voice Class:** 1:30 – 2 p.m.; \$25; class is designed for students who desire to perform solos. Students will be taught breathing techniques, pronunciation and enunciation; students will perform two (2) solos.

**\*Beginner Keyboard:** 2:15 – 3 p.m.; grades 2-4; \$30; limited to 16 students; students will need to purchase two music books and have a keyboard to practice.

**\*Performance Choir:** 3:15 - 4:15 p.m.; grades 1-4 and current 4<sup>th</sup> graders; \$30, students will prepare for August performances.

Private Piano Lessons are to be arranged directly with Rita Carpenter. For more information or to register for any courses, email Rita Carpenter at [rita.carpenter@mnps.org](mailto:rita.carpenter@mnps.org).

### **COPLA Graduation Celebration**

Saturday, May 31, at 5 p.m., the Comité de Padres Latinos (COPLA), [Committee of Latino Parents], a parents group focusing on communication with MNPS Latino parents, is hosting a Hispanic Student Graduation Celebration Event for the Class of 2008. More than 200 MNPS Hispanic students graduating from high school this year will be honored, along with their parents at the Allen Arena of Lipscomb University.

The community stakeholders working with COPLA for this year's event include the Nashville Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Lipscomb University, Harding Place Family YMCA-Hispanic Achievers, Conexión Américas, Prevent Child Abuse of Middle Tennessee, Spanish-TV, Tennessee Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and other community organizations.

Guest speakers include Mayor Karl Dean, attorney Gregg Ramos, Pastor Tommy Vallejos and others.

A reception will follow the ceremony. The food will be provided by members of the Nashville Area Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and live entertainment by Son Latino and Maria Benham.

COPLA was organized two years ago to help build relationships with the parents of Hispanic students, who comprise more than 14% of the district's student population. The organization meets monthly to share information and resources available to Spanish-speaking families, as well as develop ways to educate families on the important role of parental involvement in student success.

### **Middle College Students Collect Many Credits**

The MNPS Middle College Class of 2008 earned 275 college hours at Nashville State Community College through the school's dual enrollment program. Some of these 21 students will remain at NSCC and complete an Associate's degree. Others will transfer their college credits to different higher education institutions. Most of the students have completed enough hours to enter other institutions as sophomores; one is almost a junior! The school is still accepting applications for 2008-2009, so if this program sounds like it may be right for our family, download an application from [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org).



### **800 MNPS Students Will Go To CMA Fan Festival – For Free**

Thanks to the generosity of the Country Music Association and the Nashville Alliance for Public Education, 800 MNPS high school students will attend this year's CMA Fan Festival at no charge. The free tickets are part of a continuing effort by CMA to support music education in Metro Nashville Public Schools. For more information about this year's festival, including ordering tickets, please visit [www.cmafest.com](http://www.cmafest.com).

### **Taylor Stratton Gets a Playground Grant**

Taylor Stratton Elementary was presented a \$2000 Community Enhancement Grant, Thursday May 22, by State Representative Gary Moore and State Senator Joe Haynes. The money will be matched by the Taylor Stratton Elementary Parent Teacher Association (PTA) led by Ms. April Phillips, president. The Taylor Stratton PTA was formed during the 2007-2008 school year. The money will go toward placing playground equipment in the early childhood playground for the pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade students.

### ***Música de le Gente --- Music of the People Festival***

American Roots Music Education and Metro Parks and Recreation celebrate the music of Mexican-Americans with a special festival Saturday, May 31, from noon – 6:30 p.m. at Coleman Park Community Center (corner of Nolensville Road and Thompson Lane). The festival is free.

Throughout the afternoon there will be live music from local bands, including *Ocho Treinta*, *Son Latino* and Danny *Salazar y Trova Urbana*. At 5 p.m., the internationally renowned group from San Antonio, *Los Texmaniacs*, will perform.

Children can participate in crafts such as making paper flowers, cowboy hats, embossed tin boxes, lizard key chains and rhythm instruments. A children's folkloric group will perform at 3:30 p.m. and there will be lots of piñatas, an exhibit of visual art by Latino artists, and plenty of dancing. Food and drink will be available for sale from local vendors.

For more information contact Buffy Holton (Director, American Roots Music Education) at 385-5998 or [buffyholton@earthlink.net](mailto:buffyholton@earthlink.net). You can also visit [www.americanrootsmusic.org](http://www.americanrootsmusic.org).