



Children First!

News & Information from Metro Nashville Public Schools

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In this edition: *Revised Budget Goes to Council*
 Parent University Launches First Initiative
 The Confusion behind Education Week Graduation Report
 NSA Alum Named to Fox Reality Show's Top 20
 New Rules for Student Athletes
 Student Leaders Generate School Spirit Ideas

Revised Budget Goes to Council

The administration of Metro Nashville Public Schools has revised its operating budget proposal for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. The revised plan outlines the dollars necessary to maintain current service levels and fund district priorities to help all students meet No Child Left Behind requirements. The revised budget was presented to Mayor Karl Dean Thursday, June 5, and will be presented to the Metro Council Monday, June 9.

The focus of the revised budget is: to focus on corrective action status (NCLB, subgroups and subjects); to maintain and improve programs to support the district's increase in graduation rate; to protect the classroom; to improve student behavior and school safety; to distribute resources equitable throughout the district; and to improve accountability and compliance monitoring.

MNPS will present the plan to members of the Metro Council Monday, June 9. Members of the Metropolitan Council must give final approval to all school district funding. To view the revised budget draft or the revised budget presentation, visit <http://www.mnps.org/Page32573.aspx>.

Parent University Launches First Initiative

MNPS is excited to announce the first major initiative of Parent University, a new parental communications tool, which officially launched in November 2007. This first initiative, in collaboration with Alignment Nashville, is a grassroots effort to educate the Nashville public on the importance of graduating from high school, what is needed to graduate from high school and the restructuring of comprehensive high schools into smaller learning communities. Participating community organizations include Conexion Americas, IMF – Peniel Initiative, the Martha O'Bryan Center, Community Career Center, Metro Parks, Neighborhoods Resource Center, Nashville Prevention Partnership, Stand for Children, The Exchange Club Family Center and MNPS Area Counselors.

The goal of MNPS Parent University is to work cooperatively with the Nashville community to provide effective assistance for parents -- from pre-natal care to post secondary education success -- ensuring every parent has the tools and resources needed to help his or her child or children succeed. MNPS Parent University will utilize numerous lines of communication to reach parents, including small group meetings, informational videos, publications and a website that is currently under construction.

In the coming months and years, types of information that will be distributed through MNPS Parent University include: nutrition & exercise information for the expectant mother, what parents can do to stimulate learning in children ages 1 – 3, preparing for Pre-School, Pre-K and Kindergarten enrollment, helping your elementary school student develop study skills, addressing childhood diabetes, resolving pre-teen behavior issues, helping your child transition between grade levels, understanding graduation requirements, helping your child deal with peer pressure, understanding Advance Placement classes, applying for college scholarships, opportunities for gifted children, and how parents can become more involved in schools. If you would like more information about Parent University, contact the MNPS Customer Service Center at 259-INFO.

The Confusion behind Education Week's Newly Released Graduation Report

A recent report released by Education Week has garnered much media attention in the past week. The data in the report is confusing as it refers to the 2004-2005 school year and it does not reflect the state report card from that time period. In the three years since the data was gathered, MNPS has seen significant increases in graduation rates, rising above 70%. The official results from the 2007-2008 school years should be released later this summer.

NSA Alum Named to Fox Reality Show's Top 20

William Wingfield, alumni of Nashville School of the Arts, has just earned a Top 20 spot on Fox TV's *So You Think You Can Dance*. Wingfield has studied under the legendary Debbie Allen. He spent the past three years dancing alongside Celine Dion and previously worked with Bette Midler. Wingfield has also danced on the primetime Grammy Awards. After graduating, Wingfield has kept in contact with some of his former teachers and will make occasional returns to NSA to teach dance classes.

So You Think You Can Dance is a reality competition searching for America's top dancer. It is in its 4th season. The show airs Wednesday and Thursday evenings on the local Fox affiliate, Channel 17.

New Rules for Student Athletes

The State Board of Education has implemented a new rule effective this year pertaining to sports physicals. Every student athlete in the 7th and 9th grade must receive a complete well child checkup before he or she can participate in MNPS sports activities.

The well child checkup is a broad exam that includes a history, physical exam and age-appropriate education. Depending on your child's age and medical history, he/she may need a hearing or vision screen, lab tests or immunizations. Your child should get this checkup from his or her primary care provider. This is the doctor or nurse practitioner who takes care of them when they are sick and when they are well, and who knows them best. If your child does not have a primary care provider, you can check with your insurance company to see which doctor they recommend, or contact your local health department for more information.

You must obtain a signature from either a physician or nurse practitioner on the Interscholastic Sports Examination Form. You may obtain a copy of this form by visiting www.mnps.org – or

by stopping by the MNPS Customer Service Center on Bransford Avenue. If you need directions to the Customer Service Center, you may call 259-INFO.

The MNPS website and Tennessee Department of Education website have additional information about well child exams for student athletes. For more information about the Interscholastic Sports Examination Form, you may call Pam Baggett with the Tennessee Department of Health at 532-3101.

Student Leaders Generate School Spirit Ideas

Several of Hillwood's junior, senior and Student Government Association student leaders attended the Hillwood Topper Connection School Spirit Meeting, held Monday, June 2. A brainstorming session took place and numerous ideas for in school and after school activities were discussed. Faculty members Dr. Gore and Ms. Ashley Shaver helped facilitate the discussions.

During the summer months, this group would like to narrow the ideas and build action plans around four to five events. The plan is to then work with fellow students, parents, faculty and community members to organize the events. The next meeting of the Hillwood Topper Connection is Monday, July 7 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the Hillwood High School Library. All in the Hillwood community are welcome to attend.