

The background of the cover features a close-up of several pencils. Two are yellow with silver erasers, and one is black with a silver eraser. A black graduation cap with a red tassel is positioned in the upper right quadrant. The background is a light blue gradient with a diagonal split between blue and white, and a red triangle in the bottom right corner.

2020 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Shelby County Schools
Memphis, Tennessee



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MISSION & VISION

Our mission is to prepare all students for success in learning, leadership, and life.

Our District will be the premier school district attracting a diverse student population and effective teachers, leaders, and staff all committed to excellence.



Shelby County Schools by the numbers 2019-20

Tennessee's largest school district

One of America's 25 largest public school districts



Destination 2025 - Our Strategic Plan for Student Success

Our goal is that by 2025:



80%

of students will be college- or career-ready



90%

of seniors will graduate on time



100%

of graduates will enter college or a career



Our Schools

- Elementary - 78
- Middle - 26
- K-8 - 10
- High - 27
- Alternative - 2*
- CTC - 4
- Special - 2
- Adult - 1
- Early Learning - 1
- Virtual - 1
- Charter - 56
- TOTAL - 208

*Includes 2 schools & 7 programs



1% Asian • 73% African American • 15% Hispanic/Latinx • 7% White
• 2% Multiple • <1% Other

*Race/ethnicity is not mutually exclusive so may not equal 100%.

✓ Pre-K - 5,600 ✓ K-12 (non-charter) - 89,900 ✓ K-12 (charter) - 17,700 ✓ TOTAL - 113,200

- ✓ Optional Schools - 11,500
- ✓ Gifted/C.L.U.E. - 2,650
- ✓ iZone - 10,800
- ✓ English Language Learners - 10,500
- ✓ Empowerment Zone - 6,800
- ✓ Students with Disabilities - 13,000
- ✓ Economically Disadvantaged - 57,000



Our Students



Our Employees

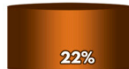
- Total Employees - 14,200
- Teachers - 6,500
- 11,500 Full-Time | 2,700 Part-Time



Female Teachers



Male Teachers



White



Hispanic

1%



African American



Asian/Native

1%

- Optional Schools - 46
- iZone Schools - 25
- IB Schools - 5
- E-Zone Schools - 8
- AP Courses - 34
- Online Courses - 220+
- Career Certifications - 50+
- College Courses - 100+



Academics



Our Community

- Volunteers - 3,900+
- Team Read Coaches - 1,100+
- Adopters - 400
- Partners - 200+

- Student Meals Served - 27 Million
- Student Bus Riders - 23,000
- Miles by Buses - 6.5 Million



Student Services



Our Budget

- Total Budget - \$1.44 Billion
- Per Pupil Expenditure - \$13,470



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SY 2019/2020

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOLS

Two Shelby County Schools named 2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education

TENNESSEE REWARD SCHOOLS

Twenty-two Shelby County Schools recognized as Reward schools - the highest distinction a school can earn in Tennessee

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Twenty-nine Shelby County Schools earned an overall Level 5 TVAAS score for student growth

RANKED AMERICA'S BEST

Six Shelby County Schools high schools ranked among America's best by U.S. News & World Report



CHARTER SCHOOLS

CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to allow the State Board of Education to retain duties as the state's appellate public charter school authorizer instead of assigning such duties to the Public Charter School Commission.

Rationale: T.C.A. §49-13-105 establishes the Public Charter School Commission that will assume the duties of the State Board of Education as an appellate authorizer for public charter schools and will serve as Board and local education agency (LEA) for those charter schools. To avoid authorizer bias, the State Board of Education should continue to hear appeals of a local board of education's decision to deny a public charter school application.



AUTHORIZER FEE

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to establish an authorizing fee structure that is identical for all charter school authorizers.

Rationale: All authorizers assume the same level of responsibility for the authorization and oversight of charter schools (e.g. reviewing monthly ADA and ADM reports, maintaining charter school enrollment records); however, the statutory cap of \$35,000 imposed on LEAs does not provide an equal opportunity for LEAs to offset the incurred costs related to supporting authorized schools. As a result, LEAs must absorb the cost of providing such services.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

CHARTER SCHOOL COMPLIANCE

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to strengthen the ability of authorizers to support and enforce the compliance of charter schools under its authority, and when necessary, assess fines for noncompliance.

Rationale: The law holds charter schools accountable to the authorizer for upholding the terms of their charter agreement but no recourse short of revocation is available to authorizers when charter schools are noncompliant. The operational effectiveness of LEAs is directly impacted when a charter school fails to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements. The cost to the LEA, whether financial or labor-related, impacts the level of services LEAs can provide for students and parents.



ACHIEVEMENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to outline provisions by which a school removed from an LEA and placed in the ASD may return to the LEA prior to the time frame set forth under T.C.A. §49-1-614.

Rationale: T.C.A. §49-1-614 requires the commissioner, in consultation with the LEA, to develop and approve a transition plan for the purpose of planning the return of a school from the ASD to the LEA once the school is no longer identified as a priority school for two (2) consecutive cycles, but no longer than a ten (10) year period. However, the law nor Tennessee Department of Education rules and regulations provide guidance for the return of such schools to the LEA prior to the designated timeframe.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDING

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to provide additional funding for capital improvements to public non-charter schools.

Rationale: Charter schools currently receive a per pupil allocation of state and local Basic Education Program (BEP) funds, including funding generated by the BEP for capital outlay; however, the High-Quality Charter School Facilities Program provides grants to charter schools to improve their facilities. The same or similar grant opportunities should be available to public non-charter schools for facility improvements.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

CHARTER SCHOOL MORATORIUM

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to place a moratorium on the expansion of charter schools (new applications for charter schools and applications for expansion of existing charters) until a study and evaluation of the effectiveness of charter schools operating under the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act is conducted by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR).

Rationale: The Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 authorized the establishment and operation of charter schools to "Improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students," (T.C.A. 49-13-102(a)(1)). In 2011, the mandatory cap limiting the number of charter schools that could operate in the state was lifted to facilitate the replication of Tennessee high-quality charter schools. Additionally, in 2017, the Tennessee High-Quality Charter Schools Act was enacted in part to increase the number of high-performing charter schools in Tennessee. Available data from the TN Department of Education indicates that on average, charter schools performed lower than district-run schools on EOC exams, vary in effectiveness as measured by Composite TVAAS scores, and suspend students at higher rates for documented rule violations. A moratorium on the expansion of charter schools is not intended to eliminate public charter schools in Tennessee but will provide an opportunity to evaluate the overall effectiveness of charter schools on student outcomes and strengthen educational opportunities for all students.





EMPLOYMENT/ WORKFORCE

BACKGROUND CHECKS

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to allow local education agencies (LEAs) flexibility in determining the suitability and fitness of individuals subject to criminal history record checks by granting time consideration for specific enumerated offenses.

Rationale: A report from the U.S. Department of Justice reported “empirical evidence suggests that there is a relationship between age and criminal desistance (the cessation of offending activity among those who have offended in the past). While there is great variability in when individuals desist from crime, eventually, the vast majority of criminals do so. Additionally, research has shown that if an individual with a criminal record remains crime-free for a period of about seven years, their risk of committing a new offense is similar to that of a person without any criminal record.” Criminal background checks serve as an important safeguard to ensure public safety and health. However, over the past years there has been an upsurge in the types of offenses that will preclude an applicant from employment and/or from providing services with an LEA. Such blanket exclusions fail to consider critical information such as the nature and age of an offense. For many, this creates a policy-driven roadblock to employment even when there is no evidence of repeated engagement in criminal activity.



STUDENTS/ACADEMICS

STATEWIDE PLAN FOR REDUCING EXPOSURE TO LEAD IN DRINKING WATER FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to require the Department of Environment and Conservation to adopt a state-wide plan to reduce public exposure to lead in drinking water sources and to prioritize funding to assist in the remediation of elevated lead levels in drinking water in Tennessee public schools.

Rationale: It is critical that schools provide a safe and healthy place for their children, including providing school drinking and cooking water that is free from hazardous contaminants such as lead. Exposure to lead is a significant health concern and may attribute, but is not limited to behavior and learning problems, lower IQ and hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems, and anemia in children. According to the Tennessee SY17-18 state report card, approximately 975,222 students attend the over 1,749 public schools in Tennessee; and the enactment of Public Chapter 0977 demonstrates the General Assembly's commitment to protecting our students. However, this requirement to test school water sources can be strengthened through a state-wide plan to reduce public exposure to lead in drinking water sources and to prioritize funding to assist in the remediation of elevated lead levels in drinking water in Tennessee public schools.

STUDENTS/ACADEMICS

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM/SCHOOL

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to remove the statutory requirement to place students in grades seven through twelve (7-12) receiving a short-term suspension (less than 10 days) in an alternative school or alternative program.

Rationale: The TN Department of Education recommended as a best practice that schools should avoid sending students to alternative schools for 5-10-day suspensions. Students should be remanded to an alternative school for an appropriate length of time for learning to occur. Mandatory alternative schools/programs increase expenditures for LEAs. If mandatory, expenditures must also include transportation costs which the district's expenditures currently does not include.



TRAUMA-INFORMED INITIATIVE FUNDING

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to provide supports and funding to assist local education agencies (LEAs) in adopting and implementing trauma-informed practices.

Rationale: "The primary mission of schools is to support students in educational achievement. To reach this goal, children must feel safe, supported, and ready to learn" (National Child Traumatic Stress Network). A child's encounter with positive experiences can prevent children from experiencing adversity while adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) may have lifelong negative impacts. The establishment of a Tennessee Trauma-Informed Initiative Fund will provide school districts with funding to assist in creating and maintaining school and classroom environments critical to reducing the impact of trauma on students.

OPPOSE

The Shelby County
Board of Education
OPPOSES...

PRE-K FUNDING REDUCTIONS

Any legislation that will result in cuts to or elimination of state pre-k funding.

UNFUNDED MANDATES

Unfunded and underfunded mandates and urges the Tennessee General Assembly to conduct a study to determine all state-imposed mandates on local education agencies (LEAs) and the fiscal impact such mandates have on the Tennessee public education system.

VOUCHERS

Implementation of the Education Savings Accounts (ESAs) Act and any other legislation aimed at instituting a voucher program for public education.



SCS STUDENTS



STORM THE HILL

2019



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Dr. Joris M. Ray, Superintendent

Shelby County Schools offers educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, creed, age, disability, national origin, or genetic information.



WE ARE 91



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