

MEMPHIS -SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

2023



TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISTRICT PROFILE

- About the District **1**
 - Mission & Vision
 - Strategic Initiatives
-

ACADEMICS

- Age-Appropriate Materials Act
 - Mandatory Alternative School Placement **2-4**
 - Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) High School Cohort Graduation Rate Requirement
-

CHARTER SCHOOLS

- Applicability of State Statutes to Charter Schools **5**
-

OPERATIONS

- Policy Pamphlets (Manuals) Requirement **6-7**
 - Electronic Participation in Board Meetings
-

PERSONNEL

- Licensure Requirements to Teach Elementary Physical Education Courses **8**
-

SUPPORT

- School Safety
 - Mental Health **9-10**
 - Local Control
 - Fiscal Impact Statements
-

MEET THE TEAM

11



DISTRICT PROFILE



ABOUT THE DISTRICT

Memphis-Shelby County Schools is Tennessee's largest public school district and is among the 25 largest public school districts in the United States. Formerly comprised of two districts, Memphis City Schools and Shelby County Schools, MSCS serves over 100,000 students in more than 200 schools. MSCS is the second largest employer in Shelby County with over 13,900 employees, including 6,000 teachers.



MISSION & VISION

To prepare all students for success in learning, leadership, and life.

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



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strategic Initiative 1: Strengthen early literacy and continuing literacy.

Strategic Initiative 2: Recruit and retain the best District leaders and teachers in the nation, immerse them in professional development to embrace and teach foundational literacy skills, and entrench them in the community and classroom.

Strategic Initiative 3: Create relevant and equitable academic choices and learning environments to ensure scholars are prepared for the global workforce.

AGE-APPROPRIATE MATERIALS ACT



(T.C.A. § 49-6-3803)

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the TN General Assembly to amend the Age-Appropriate Materials Act of 2022 to provide the local education agency or charter school the opportunity to resolve issues received from a student, parent/guardian, or a school employee regarding the appropriateness and suitability of school library collections through administrative procedures prior to requiring action by the local board of education or public charter school governing body.



MANDATORY ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PLACEMENT

(T.C.A. § 49-6-3402)

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the TN General Assembly to provide additional discretion to a director of schools (or designee) to determine whether assignment to an alternative school or program is the appropriate placement for a student who committed an offense of violence, if such placement may endanger the safety of other students or staff at the alternative school or program.

ACADEMICS

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA) HIGH SCHOOL COHORT GRADUATION RATE REQUIREMENTS



(34 CFR Part 200 and ESSA § 8101(25))

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to direct the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) or other appropriate agency to (1) perform a state-wide and national study of high schools identified for support and improvement solely based on the ESSA cohort graduation rate requirement; (2) determine if high schools that graduate less than 67 percent of their students have corresponding high dropout rates attributed to issues beyond the control of the local education agency and/or school; and (3) if the high school cohort graduation requirement has a disproportionate impact among urban school districts.

CHARTER SCHOOLS



APPLICABILITY OF STATE STATUTES TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

(T.C.A.)

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to clarify throughout TN Code Annotated when statutes are applicable to the local education agency and/or its schools and local board of education and a charter school and/or its governing body.

POLICY PAMPLETS (MANUALS) REQUIREMENTS



(T.C.A. § 49-2-207)

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the TN General Assembly to amend the statutory requirement for a notice of each deleted policy to be filed and made available in each school library as required currently under T.C.A. § 49-2-207.

OPERATIONS



ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

(T.C.A. § 49-2-203)

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the TN General Assembly to amend T.C.A. 49-2-203(c)(4) by increasing the number of times a school board member may participate electronically in a board meeting when working out of the county and/or due to family emergency.

PERSONNEL

LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS TO TEACH ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION COURSES



(T.C.A. § 49-6-1021)

The Shelby County Board of Education urges the Tennessee General Assembly to enact legislation to address the immediate issue of teacher shortages by granting authority to the Commissioner of Education to allow physical education courses in elementary grades to be taught by individuals under a permit.

SUPPORT



LEGISLATION SUPPORTED BY THE DISTRICT

LOCAL CONTROL

The Shelby County Board of Education supports legislation that maintains the ability of the elected board of education to appoint the Superintendent of Schools as well as act in the best interest of their students and community.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENTS

The Shelby County Board of Education supports legislation requiring the fiscal note prepared by the state's Fiscal Review Committee to indicate the estimated fiscal impact on local education agencies.

SUPPORT

LEGISLATION SUPPORTED BY THE DISTRICT



SCHOOL SAFETY

The Shelby County Board of Education supports legislative action that:

- *provides increased funding and grants opportunities for local education agencies to make school safety improvements*
- *aids local education agencies' student data protection, information privacy and other cybersecurity efforts*

MENTAL HEALTH

The Shelby County Board of Education supports legislative action that provides greater and sustained state resources to support children's mental health and expands access to needed services.

MEET THE TEAM

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Althea Greene - Board Chair

Michelle McKissack - Co-Chair, Legislative Advocacy Committee

Stephanie Love- Co-Chair, Legislative Advocacy Committee

SUPERINTENDENT

Toni Williams

GENERAL COUNSEL

Kenneth M. Walker II - General Counsel & Chief Legal Officer

Maria Stewart - Manager Governmental Affairs & Compliance

Barbara Wade - Policy Advisor

Genevieve S. Land - Senior Compliance Specialist

RaSean Jenkins - Project Coordinator

Erica Evans - Associate General Counsel



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