TENNESSEE
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

General Information

LEA Name	Memphis-Shelby County Schools
Point of Contact's Name	Debra Fox-Stanford
Point of Contact's Title	IZone Regional Superintendent

Eligible School(s)	School Type	Eligibility Criteria
A.B. Hill Elementary	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☐ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☒ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Carver College and Career Academy **School Type (Hybrid)**	☐ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☒ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☐ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Chickasaw Middle	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☒ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☐ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Douglass K-8	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☒ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☐ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Geeter School K-8	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☐ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☒ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Grandview Heights Middle	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☐ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☒ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Hickory Ridge Middle	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☒ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☐ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Kate Bond Middle	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☐ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☒ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Kingsbury Middle	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☒ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☐ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Mt. Pisgah Middle	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☒ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☐ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Raleigh Egypt Middle	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☐ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☒ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Robert R. Church Elementary	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☐ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☒ Dropped from a "D" to an "F" letter grade
Sherwood Elementary	☐ Traditional ☐ Charter	☐ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☒ Dropped from a "D" to an "F"

	☐ Virtual	letter grade
Treadwell Elementary	☒ Traditional ☐ Charter ☐ Virtual	☒ Two Years of "F" letter grade ☐ Dropped from a “D” to an “F” letter grade

Eligible School(s)	Name of School Leader/Principal	Years as Principal at Eligible School	Overall Years of Experience as a Principal
A.B. Hill Elementary	**Derrick McIntosh**	**2 years**	**4 years**
Carver College and Career Academy	**Serves as the state reporting school for multiple alternative and non-traditional school sites**	**10 years—Suggs Multiple School Leaders**	**10 years—Suggs Multiple School Leaders**
Chickasaw Middle	**Tiaa Turner**	**6 years**	**6 years**
Douglass K-8	**Carolyn Brown**	**2 years**	**2 years**
Geeter School K-8	**Jeremy Martin**	**4 years**	**4 years**
Grandview Heights Middle	**Deartis Barber**	**11 years**	**19 years**
Hickory Ridge Middle	**James Gordon**	**4 years**	**11 years**
Kate Bond Middle	**Christopher Murrah**	**11 years**	**12 years**
Kingsbury Middle	**Taisha Nelson**	**2 years**	**2 years**
Mt. Pisgah Middle	**Danielle Leach**	**4 years**	**6 years**
Raleigh Egypt Middle	**Dionne Curry**	**4 years**	**8 years**
Robert R. Church Elementary	**Marqui Fifer**	**6 years**	**10 years**
Sherwood Elementary	**Terra Stigger**	**8 years**	**8 years**
Treadwell Elementary	**Jason Carr**	**9 years**	**9 years**

Strategic Planning

What are the academic priorities for the eligible school(s)? How were these priorities determined?

Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ academic priorities for impacted schools focus on accelerating equitable student outcomes through four interconnected areas: high-quality Tier I instruction, early literacy and foundational skill development, data-informed instruction, and student engagement. Together, these priorities reflect a systemwide commitment to ensuring that every student receives rigorous instruction, targeted support, and meaningful learning experiences that lead to long-term success.

The first priority is high-quality Tier I instruction in every classroom, every day. MSCS is prioritizing consistent, standards-aligned, and rigorous instruction that includes clear learning targets, effective checks for understanding, purposeful questioning, and strong instructional delivery. By strengthening Tier I instruction, schools reduce the need for intervention and ensure that all students have access to grade-level content and expectations.

A second priority is early literacy and foundational skill development. The district is strengthening literacy and numeracy foundations, particularly in the early grades, while also providing targeted

literacy and math support in secondary grades. This focus ensures that students develop the essential reading, writing, and mathematical skills necessary for continued academic growth and postsecondary readiness.

The third priority centers on data-informed instruction and progress monitoring. This approach ensures that PLCs, which are structured, school-based collaborations where educators work to improve teaching and learning, and data team meetings lead to timely reteaching, targeted interventions, and instructional adjustments based on evidence of student learning. While these expectations are universal, the level of implementation naturally varies across the 14 eligible schools. Recognizing this spectrum, the district has shifted from a "one-size-fits-all" model to a responsive support framework. This school year, we are providing additional layers of scaffolding tailored to each site's specific needs.

The fourth priority is student engagement and experience. MSCS recognizes that academic success is closely tied to attendance, belonging, and positive school culture. Schools are focusing on improving student engagement by strengthening relationships, increasing attendance, and creating supportive learning environments where students feel connected, motivated, and valued. Together, these priorities form a coherent, equity-driven strategy designed to close achievement gaps, support all learners, and ensure students are on track for long-term success.

The schools' four priorities are derived from the MSCS 2025-2030 Academic Plan, which aligns district goals with Tennessee's TISA framework. The priorities are based on multi-year performance trends, state accountability labels such as CSI/Priority status and community-identified needs. For impacted schools, these priorities are further refined via root-cause analysis.

Additionally, the priorities are reinforced through the consistent use of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), district-developed curriculum pacing, and regular feedback from academic coordinators. To ensure resources are deployed where they are needed most, performance is monitored through recurring data cycles at the classroom, school, regional, and district levels, including PLCs, data team meetings, MTSS reviews, and CompStat.

Annual TCAP and EOC results serve as the primary metric for determining long-term goals, ensuring all strategies meet both district expectations and state accountability mandates. By layering these systems, MSCS ensures that impacted schools receive aligned instructional support and continuous monitoring to drive sustained academic growth.

What specific strategies have been implemented to improve academic performance at the eligible school(s)? How and when is performance of the eligible school(s) analyzed?

Memphis-Shelby County Schools has implemented a coherent, systemwide set of strategies to improve academic performance in eligible schools, grounded in the district's Academic Plan and aligned to the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement (TISA) framework. The specific strategies focus on strengthening Tier I instruction, delivering targeted interventions, and using frequent, high-quality data analysis to guide instructional decisions and resource allocation.

The foundation of the improvement strategy is strengthening the instructional core through consistent implementation of high-quality instructional materials across all content areas. The district provides teachers with comprehensive curriculum maps, pacing guides, and scripted lesson plans developed by Academic Coordinators. The scripted lessons are particularly vital for supporting our influx of permit teachers, which are notably higher in these schools. Additionally, teachers receive coaching around lesson internalization with job-embedded professional development that focuses on content-specific pedagogy.

Utilizing TISA funding, specialized education assistants are strategically deployed to support early literacy in grades K-2 and receive monthly professional development to strengthen early literacy instruction.

Regional Superintendents monitor weekly walkthrough trends and conduct more frequent curriculum fidelity checks at eligible schools to ensure scripted lesson integrity. Simultaneously, district academic coordinators and the school leadership (ILT) use weekly data to address action items within a seven-day window. This cycle ensures every teacher receives weekly coaching with documented evidence of improvement.

To address student learning gaps, the district utilizes a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) driven by quarterly comprehensive i-Ready data reviews to track overall growth.

To ensure instructional fidelity, we use bi-weekly reports to monitor Tier II and Tier III engagement and verify students meeting required usage minutes and maintaining a minimum 70% lesson pass rate. Additionally, school-based interventionists conduct frequent check-ins to confirm that progress monitoring is documented against established benchmarks for each tier. Schools also leverage before-, during-, and after-school tutoring, and specialized interventions such as Reading Horizons for students showing characteristics of dyslexia.

Performance analysis occurs through recurring data cycles to ensure timely responsiveness. Teachers and leaders analyze student performance during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings and Data Team Meetings using common formative assessments (CFAs), benchmark assessments, student work samples, and daily quick checks. These short-cycle reviews occur weekly or bi-weekly at the school level and are supported by district- and region-level analysis through CompStat. CompStat requires schools to examine district common assessments for trends overall, by subgroups, teachers, and grade-bands for ELA, math, science, social studies, and writing.
Each district department aligned to Academics, Operations, Technology, and Innovation (AOTI), including Regional Superintendents, are also required to participate in CompStat with a strategic focus on aligning resources to support on-going improvements among the eligible schools. During this

collegial collaboration, district leaders have opportunities to share trends across regions and feeder patterns, discuss problems of practice and adjust district-level supports where needed.

While these strategies form the district's baseline, MSCS is applying a differentiated model of intensive oversight for the eligible schools. This ensures that the schools with the greatest need receive the highest level of implementation, monitoring and administrative support.

Finance

How has TISA funding been used to drive progress toward the goals outlined in the LEA's TISA Accountability Report?

TISA funding has been strategically aligned to support the goals identified in the LEA's TISA Accountability Report, with a focus on improving student outcomes, strengthening instructional quality, and addressing the needs of historically underserved student groups. Funds have been used to support staffing aligned to student needs, targeted academic interventions, instructional materials, and professional learning to ensure effective implementation of evidence-based practices. Additionally, TISA resources have supported wraparound services and operational investments that remove barriers to learning and promote equitable access to high-quality instruction. Ongoing monitoring ensures expenditures remain aligned to accountability goals and measurable outcomes.

In what ways has the LEA adjusted its spending strategy for the eligible school(s)? How is the return on investment measured for these spending strategies?

The LEA has adjusted its spending strategy by prioritizing targeted investments in eligible schools based on student performance data, enrollment trends, and identified needs. By reallocating resources toward direct instructional support, the LEA is implementing evidence-based interventions—such as high-dosage tutoring and extended learning—alongside staffing models designed to provide comprehensive academic and social-emotional support. Return on investment is measured through multiple indicators, including student achievement data, growth measures, attendance, graduation rates, and progress monitoring results. Fiscal reviews and program evaluations are conducted regularly to assess effectiveness and inform future budget decisions.

What role does the school leader/principal play in budgeting decisions for the eligible school(s)?

MSCS provides funding to school leaders through a Student-Based Budgeting (SBB) model, which ensures that allocations are based on specific enrollment needs. Under this framework, school leaders are allocated a per-pupil dollar amount weighted by student characteristics—such as poverty, English language proficiency, or disabilities—rather than receiving a fixed set of staff positions or resources from the central office. This shift toward strategic budgeting empowers leaders with significant autonomy, often controlling 40–80% of their school's budget, to align financial resources with their specific instructional goals and the MSCS Academic Plan.

Prior to the upcoming school year, leaders participate in a Budget Check-Out process to ensure that the final budget reflects the school's customized academic plan by utilizing the flexibility of the SBB model. During this process, leaders must reflect on their priorities to ensure resource allocation is informed by the school's strategic plan. This involves documenting the most urgent student needs, developing strategies to address those needs, and identifying the specific budget implications required for successful implementation. By utilizing data-driven tools like the Academic Return on Investment worksheet, leaders can bypass traditional rigid staffing ratios to reinvest funds into targeted priorities like school-based literacy and/or math coach, interventionists, or attendance liaison.

There is even more flexibility given to priority and CSI designated schools to address their unique needs. This increased flexibility allows these school leaders to purchase one specialized staffing personnel above formula where data reflects the need.

School leaders also collaborate with the LEA to ensure TISA funds are used effectively. Through surveys, leaders provide input on staffing, instructional resources, and intervention strategies and are responsible for monitoring implementation and outcomes at the school level. This shared decision-making approach ensures that budget decisions are responsive to student needs while maintaining alignment with LEA goals, fiscal accountability requirements, and TISA guidelines.

Staffing

Staffing is often the largest category of school and LEA spending. How is the LEA using its funds to support the recruitment and retention of the most effective educators and leaders within its eligible school(s)? Does this differ from the LEA's higher performing schools? If so, how?

Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) recognizes staffing is the primary driver of educational quality. To support its eligible schools, MSCS has transitioned from traditional hiring to a proactive, data-driven ecosystem focused on the **"Retain, Reclaim, Recruit"** framework.

By hosting strategic hiring events – ranging from virtual platforms to in-person interviews – Human Resources has modernized its reach to ensure that priority and eligible schools hire the most effective teachers identified by LOE scores and fill the most critical vacancies. MSCS invests heavily in "Aspiring Teachers" by expanding pathways for non-traditional candidates. This includes universal Praxis support and reimbursements to transition permit teachers into fully licensed professionals to ensure qualified teachers are placed in priority and eligible schools.

Retention efforts are centered on professional growth, and financial bonuses for retention are being explored for implementation at the end of this school year. MSCS utilizes a tiered support system, which provides mentorship and personalized development to struggling teachers in the eligible schools listed. This is complemented by a cross-functional Retention Task Force that identifies high-turnover locations and intervenes with leadership support and tailored solutions. While higher-performing schools receive routine administrative support, Priority and these eligible schools receive intensive, cross-functional collaboration determined specifically by high-turnover data to stabilize their workforce.

The cornerstone of the support being provided to the eligible schools in the reinstituted regional model which involves a high level of collaboration between the schools and their Regional Superintendent. The partnership between the Regional Superintendent and the principals provides a direct line of communication to district leadership, ensuring that the unique needs of the elementary and middle school campuses are advocated for at the highest levels. Transitions at the classroom level are supported by regionally-assigned Academic Coordinators. These coordinators provide timely, side-by-side support to teachers, assisting with the implementation of rigorous curricula and the analysis of student data. This "boots on the ground" approach ensures instructional shifts are not just theoretical but are actually manifesting in daily classroom practices.

At the heart of instructional improvements and teacher coaching are the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The district has prioritized the development of these communities to serve as the engine of academic and cultural growth. Within these PLCs, teachers and staff engage in collaborative inquiry, moving away from isolated instruction toward a model of shared accountability. By regularly reviewing student work and common assessment data, these teams can make agile adjustments to their teaching strategies.

MSCS has a profound commitment to ensuring every student has access to a school environment that is academically rigorous, culturally responsive, and community-supported.

Within the last 2-3 years, what leadership changes have been made, if any, at the eligible school(s)? What led to these changes?

Three of the 14 eligible schools have had leadership changes in the past 2-3 years: A. B. Hill Elementary, Kingsbury Middle, and Douglas K-8. These changes were the result of school climate and culture issues which needed to be addressed.

Instruction

In what ways does the LEA ensure that all components of the eligible school(s)'s instructional program—curriculum, materials, interventions, and assessments—work together to advance grade level expectations for all students, as set by Tennessee's academic standards?

To align with the strategic goals of Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS), the LEA ensures instructional coherence through a rigorous framework of alignment, monitoring, and professional support. By integrating the following four pillars, MSCS ensures that curriculum, materials, interventions, and assessments work in tandem to meet Tennessee academic standards.

Curriculum and High-Quality Instructional Materials

The LEA mandates the use of High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) vetted for strict alignment with Tennessee standards. The use of district-wide curriculum maps and pacing guides ensures equitable access to rigorous grade-level content across all schools.

Standardized district-wide lesson plans include built-in scaffolds for English Learners (EL) and students with disabilities.

Use of the unit and lesson preparation guides assists teachers and leaders with wide angle curriculum internalization through the unit guide which is completed at the start of each unit to support the understanding of how text and tasks are connected. The lesson preparation guide supports the intellectual preparation of teachers to prepare for the delivery of lessons, prepare scaffolds for students, and prepare opportunities for students to carry the cognitive load of lessons.

Professional Learning

Weekly teacher collaboratives require teachers to study the curriculum and analyze student work and assessment data against the Tennessee standards. District-level academic coordinators and school-based coaches provide direct support to ensure the taught curriculum matches the written curriculum.

Professional learning offerings are hosted for grade-bands K-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The series focuses on content-specific topics and informed by district and school-based instructional walks. Additionally, data collected through school learning walks and district common assessments inform our Leadership Development Weeks, District Learning Days, Leadership and Teacher Labs. Schools showing instructional gaps are required to have representation at these customized labs.

To support the staff delivering district initiatives and to drive system-wide improvement, it has been proposed to allocate funds for substitute teachers to cover classrooms while current teachers attend professional learning opportunities focused on instructional best practices. This ensures that essential professional development can occur without disrupting daily student instruction.

Multi-layered Assessment System

A district-wide interim assessment platform (Performance Matters) mirrors the depth and complexity of the state assessment, and it allows the LEA to identify instructional gaps early, ensuring teaching remains aligned with grade-level expectations throughout the academic year. District-wide common formative assessments are administered three-times across grades 2-12 for all content areas and are created based on the standards that have been taught to provide teachers with data to guide instructional planning. Additionally, these schools have opportunities to design school-level short-cycle assessments to address student gaps unique to their schools.

MTSS Framework (Intervention)

To bridge performance gaps without replacing core Tier 1 instruction, iReady is our universal intervention platform and regular data-driven meetings are conducted to monitor student progress and adjust instructional levels according to current student needs.

School Culture & Community

How are teachers, students, and families involved in the decision-making for the eligible school(s), what types of decisions can these stakeholders impact, and what changes have been made as a result of their input?

Teachers, students, and families play an essential and structured role in the decision-making processes for eligible schools. Their voices are gathered through formal committees, surveys, public meetings, and ongoing school-based engagement structures to ensure that decisions reflect the needs and priorities of the school community.

Teachers contribute through surveys, faculty meetings, instructional leadership teams, and school improvement committees. Their input through the Insight Surveys and other school climate surveys directly influence the selection of curriculum resources, adjustments to academic programming, instructional strategies, intervention supports, and enrichment opportunities. Teacher feedback has also led to enhancements in professional learning, refinement of assessment practices, and expansion of extracurricular and enrichment offerings aligned to student interests and academic needs.

Students participate through student councils or student government associations,. These groups provide structured opportunities for student voice in areas such as healthy food options, school climate initiatives, dress code or uniform considerations, field experiences, incentive programs, and end-of-year activities. Student input through the panorama student perception surveys and other methods have resulted in more inclusive school events, improved cafeteria offerings, and programming that better reflects student interests and wellness priorities.

Families are engaged through Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTOs/PTAs), site-based decision-making councils, family forums, and district and school surveys. Their input informs decisions regarding the allocation of school-level funding, school improvement priorities, family engagement strategies, and the development of community partnerships. As a result of family feedback, schools have strengthened communication systems, expanded after-school opportunities, and increased partnerships with community organizations to better support student learning and well-being.

Families are engaged through Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTOs/PTAs), site-based decision-making councils, family forums, and district and school surveys. Their input informs decisions regarding the allocation of school-level funding, school improvement priorities, family engagement strategies, and the development of community partnerships. As a result of family feedback, schools have strengthened communication systems, expanded after-school opportunities, and increased partnerships with community organizations to better support student learning and well-being.

All three stakeholder groups—teachers, students, and families—also provide input on broader issues through district surveys and in-person meetings. This includes feedback related to school climate, resource allocation, district budget priorities, potential school closures or consolidations, naming of newly constructed school buildings, the interview and selection of school principals, and emerging community needs. Their contributions have led to more transparent planning processes, targeted use of resources, and initiatives that more closely align with the academic, social, and emotional needs of students.

Through these collaborative structures, stakeholder engagement is not only encouraged but embedded in continuous improvement efforts, ensuring that decisions are informed, responsive, and student-centered.

Additional Information

Any additional evidence (i.e., context, qualitative data, quantitative data) to provide the State Board prior to the hearing?

To further combat chronic absenteeism this year, investments in wraparound supports such as Truancy Prevention Specialists and Attendance Liaisons were made with priority given to eligible schools showing the greatness attendance/truancy needs.

Special Fund Allocations

Within these 14 schools, we recognize that some demonstrate even greater needs, requiring MSCS to provide multiple layers of support through special funding sources. These funding sources include the State School Improvement Grant (SSIG 2.0) and Turnaround Action Grant (TAG 5.0) funds.

The SSIG 2.0 Grant provides a two-year bridge for districts to support schools with Priority or Comprehensive Support Improvement (CSI) designations, specifically targeting academic gaps identified during the school improvement planning process. Similarly, TAG funds are geared toward implementing these improvement plans by aligning resources with evidence-based interventions and proven levers of change. Notably, this funding has allowed schools to invest in undergoing systemic changes through a partnership with UVA, focusing on executive leadership development and turnaround best practices. This year, the district has uniquely expanded this partnership to include specialized instructional coaching and professional development tailored for schools with high multilingual populations, such as Kingsbury Middle.

To avoid stacking these grant purchases, MSCS has moved to a structured alignment framework that streamlines purchases with the school's comprehensive needs analysis and determine which grant's allowable uses best align to each school specific need.