

University MNPS

Transitions

WHERE WE WERE: MNPS has placed a deep historic focus on increasing its district graduation rate, which is currently 81.3%. However, we now know that graduation is not enough. At MNPS, we hold ourselves accountable for not just graduation rates, but for seamless transition into higher education, employment at high wage or high demand careers, or enlistment. Our students know the value of higher education; in their senior surveys, 72% report wanting to attend a two or four-year college. But the barriers facing our students are significant. According to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission's most recent year of data, 50% of MNPS students matriculate into two- or four-year institutions after graduation. While this number exceeds the national average for large urban school districts, we know we can do better. MNPS has worked to foster numerous high-quality partnerships to improve and accelerate students' postsecondary outcomes, including with the New Skills Ready program, college and career counseling organizations, employers, and higher education partners.

WHERE WE ARE GOING: MNPS has plans to develop our University MNPS initiative to deepen the college and career readiness supports offered to students in these important ways:

- **High school credit and schedule redesign:** We will examine the zoned high school schedule to better accommodate the diverse needs of our students, provide equitable access to high-quality pathways and coursework, and increase hands-on learning experiences, all while considering a thoughtful redesign of our credit and scheduling strategy.
- **College access programming:** We will expand exclusive scholarship opportunities for MNPS students through new partnerships with organizations and universities. Additionally, we will expand the "University You" program, a summer experience on Belmont University's campus for our first-generation college students.
- **College and career counseling:** We will enhance access to counseling services, ensuring students receive personalized and timely information about post-secondary opportunities.
- **AVID:** We will increase the number of students completing AVID coursework, a college-readiness system focused on equipping students with essential academic and life skills, preparing them for success in higher education and beyond.
- **Dual enrollment and EPSOs:** We will expand our Dual Enrollment and Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSO) programs, so students have more chances to earn college credits while still in high school. This expansion will broaden access to higher education and reduce the financial burden on our students.
- **Academies of Nashville and career-based learning:** We will continue to partner with local businesses to offer internships,

apprenticeships, and hands-on experiences that align with students' career aspirations. Further, we are committed to launching an Academies 2.0 model that ensures the AON model builds on its strengths to create career pathways that are aligned to Nashville's labor market and growing industries for 2023 and beyond.

MEASURABLE GOALS:

Increasing the number of:

- Students completing AVID coursework
- Students completing EPSOs
- EPSOs offered
- AON pathways aligned to high-wage, high-demand, and high-skill jobs
- Students participating in career-based learning
- Students receiving a University MNPS scholarship

AT A GLANCE

- **Challenges:** Diverse and frequent post-secondary pathways, opportunities, and counseling is needed to ensure every student leaves an MNPS high school with a plan that leads them to a high-wage, high-demand, and high-skill career.
- **Opportunities:** Partner to create and provide high-quality tutoring through a research-based model
- **Outcomes:** Improved academic and SEL outcomes
- **Partnerships:** Local and regional higher education institutions, local business partners, college and career-focused organizations

INITIATIVE LEADS:

Dr. Mason Bellamy, *Chief of Academics and Schools*

Sarah Chin, *Chief of Strategy*

Dr. Elisa Noris, *Interim Chief of Student Support Services*