

Children First!

News & Information from Metro Nashville Public Schools

Sept. 28, 2007

Special education conference set for Sept. 29

An educational conference for parents of students with disabilities who attend Metro Nashville public schools is scheduled tomorrow at West End Middle School.

The half-day conference begins at 8 a.m. and is sponsored by MNPS and the Family Advisory Council on Special Education (FACE). The conference is one of many initiatives by the Special Education Department to boost its already excellent rating by parents of students with disabilities, as evidenced by last year's state survey showing more than 90% say they consider themselves equal partners with schools in planning their child's IEP.

No plans for new department

Contrary to some media reports, MNPS has no plans or proposals under consideration to create its own police department for schools. While the state Department of Education is researching how feasible it would be for local districts to create their own departments, there has been no discussion by Metro Schools officials concerning the issue. MNPS has been very fortunate to have the cooperation of the Metro Police Department in placing School Resource Officers in our middle and high schools without cost to the district. That relationship has greatly benefited our schools and students.

Another clarification is needed concerning some of the statistics on student discipline which were reported in this week's meeting of the Board of Education. For example, "assaults on students" or "assaults on staff" includes such actions as brandishing a pencil or throwing a book – the kind of impulsive and usually harmless behavior that has occurred in schoolrooms for generations. However, MNPS reports those numbers because we are very serious about making our schools secure because safety is our No. 1 concern.

National honor for MNPS teacher

Newt Rowland, a technology instructor at Cohn Adult High School, will be among 102 educators from across the country honored at the Cisco Networking Academy 10-Year Anniversary Salute next week.

During his previous tenure at Stratford High, Rowland helped create the Stratford Information Technology Academy (SITA), which has won national acclaim for its state-of-the-art facilities and innovative methods for preparing students for a technology career. The Cisco Networking Academy has been a partner in that effort. Worldwide, the

Networking Academy has provided more than 1.6 million students in more than 160 countries with IT and networking skills essential to succeed in the global economy.

First step toward national honor

Last week, M.L. King Magnet High School successfully completed the site visit from the State Department of Education for the Blue Ribbon Award. The Blue Ribbon Award is a national honor for outstanding public and private schools, and MLK could be nominated by the state because students scored in the top 10% nationally on reading and math tests. Final nominations will be made by the Commissioner of Education for the State of Tennessee. If MLK is nominated, an application must be completed and sent to the U.S. Department of Education in the spring. Applications from all the states will be reviewed, and a list of Blue Ribbon Schools will be published in the fall of 2008.

Take a tour and see our East Nashville schools

Parents and community members are invited to learn first-hand about our schools in East Nashville, to see what makes our schools excellent and to learn what the community can do to help support their improvement.

The Eastside Team of Stand for Children is sponsoring a “Tour of Schools” Friday, Oct. 19, from 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Fashioned after the local Tours of Homes that have become so successful, the participants will get a guided bus tour to several of the schools in the area. The registration deadline is Oct. 12; go to <http://www.stand.org/chapter.asp?ID=279> to sign up. For more information, contact Francie at Stand for Children (972-0765) or at hunt@stand.org.