

MNPS SMALLER LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Glossary of Terms

Advisory Program A safe and welcoming place for students to nurture relationships with peers and adults while building skills for success.

Advisory A place where an advisor, also serving as an advocate for each child, mentors students academically, socially, ethically, and emotionally.

Alignment Nashville Formed in 2002 by the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce. They will assist MNPS by taking our strategic plan and aligning community resources to achieve it in order to achieve a student success and the success of our community as a whole.

Alternative scheduling A non-traditional format for organizing the school day. This includes A/B Block Scheduling, which rotates Day A and Day B, and a 4X4 block schedule, which offers four courses one semester and four new courses the second semester. Both forms of the block schedule allow a total of eight credits per school year, as opposed to the six credits offered with a traditional six-period school day.

Career Clusters 16 Nationally Recognized

- Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, Audio-Video Technology, and Communications
- Business, Management and Administration
- Education and Training
- Finance
- Government and Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing, Sales, and Service
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics

Career Academies A smaller learning community in which a team of teachers serves a group of students and the focus is on a particular career or theme of study.

Career Academy Partnership Councils Industry specific councils designed to align business industry resources with Career Academy needs. The councils will also assist in recognizing highly sought after industry skill sets that can be incorporated into daily instruction

Cycle of Continuous Improvement: Seven Steps Step 1: Reflect on existing practice. Step 2: Identify gaps between existing and desired practice. Step 3: Generate and study strategies to adopt. Step 4: Develop consensus for adopting a set of strategies. Step 5: Devise implementation plan. Step 6: Develop a plan to assess implementation progress and impact. Step 7: Implement plan.

Differentiated Instruction Offering a variety of teaching strategies that address the learning styles, academic levels, and pacing needs of all students.

External Evaluation Team An external team of evaluators that can provide a formative evaluation to be used to refine and adjust the approach and implementation of SLCs as needed.

Five Domains of Research-based SLC Practice

- Interdisciplinary Teaching and Learning Teams
- Rigorous, Relevant Curriculum and Instruction
- Inclusive Program and Practices
- Continuous Program Improvement
- School/District Support for SLCs

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Glossary of Terms (cont.)

- Framework for 21st Century Learning** • Core subjects • 21st century content • Learning and thinking skills • ICT literacy (Information and communications technology) • Life skills • 21st century assessments.
- Freshman Academies** A small learning community in which first-time 9th graders are separated from the rest of the school and taught by teams of teachers. Freshman Academies are designed to ease the transition into high school.
- Global Awareness** Using 21st century skills to understand and address global issues; learning from and working collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work and community contexts; and understanding other nations and cultures, including the use of non-English languages.
- Implementation Team** Stakeholders charged with restructuring the school to meet Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) goals and objectives.
- Inclusion** All students, regardless of ability, have equal access to all learning opportunities.
- Interdisciplinary Teaching** A team of teachers will share a few hundred (or fewer) students and be responsible for their educational progress. The team of teachers (across multiple disciplines) will incorporate a common theme into individual instruction.
- Partnership 2010 Strategies** Nashville's Area Chamber of Commerce published report, developed by Market Street Services, identified five target business sectors: Headquarters, Health Care, Advanced Manufacturing, Digital Music/Music & Entertainment Business, Logistics, Warehousing, and Wholesale Trade.
- Professional Development** In-service/workshops that equip teachers to improve teaching and learning to meet the needs of their students.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)** Professional development that empowers teachers to direct their own professional growth, improves classroom instruction, and creates systemic change in schools.
- Project Objectives** • All students will graduate with 21st Century skills and achievements • Schools will be personalized and decentralized • Curriculum and instruction will be more rigorous and relevant • Increase Involvement of Parents and Community • Students will be connected to post-secondary and career opportunities.
- Relationships** Caring student-focused environments that help students build attachments to their school and provide them with support to overcome obstacles while encouraging them to strive for excellence.
- Relevance** Preparing students for the workforce in the 21st century by relating to students' interests and needs, incorporating real-world situations and contexts, and linking it to a global economy and democratic life.

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Glossary of Terms (cont.)

- Rigor** Rigor is a level of learning that is more than memorizing, restating, and reciting. Students must become adept at deep understanding, applying knowledge, solving problems, and analyzing.
- School Culture** The attitudes, beliefs, and values that permeate within a school.
- Shared Leadership** Stakeholder representatives that guide the SLC initiative.
- Smaller Learning Communities** Smaller divisions within a large high school where small groups of students are with an assigned leader, staff, and guidance counselor the majority of the school day.
- Speakers Bureau** A web-based database that links business professionals willing to speak to classrooms with specific teacher requests and classroom needs. www.schoolvolunteers.org.
- Stakeholders** All parties (Community partners, businesses, students, parents, and school personnel) with a vested interest in the success of the innovation and redesign of schools.
- Summer Bridge Program** A intervention program for incoming 9th graders that provides students with the opportunity to become familiar with their new school building, learn time management and study skills, and raise core academic skills necessary for successful entrance into the 9th grade.
- Team Leaders** Assigned to each Freshman Academy and Career/Thematic Academy.
- Work Based Learning** Work Based Learning is a school-based program linked to a specific classroom curriculum • Apprenticeships • Internships • On the job training etc
- Team** SLCs depend on a group (or team) of teachers who collaborate together around the needs of a shared set of students that remain with the teachers over time.

ADDITIONAL MNPS & SCHOOL RELATED TERMS

- 9th Grade Counselor** One additional district-provided counselor for high schools.
- Academic Assessments** Researching the performance of students and schools.
- Accelerated learning strategies** Subject Benchmark Program.
- Alignment Initiatives** • 9th Grade Academy • Business Engagement • Advisor/Advisee
- AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)** In-school academic support program that prepares students for college eligibility and success.
- Career and Technical Education** Incorporating rigorous and challenging academic content standards and provide a non-duplicative sequence of courses leading to an industry-recognized credential or certificate, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.
- Center for Asset Development** CAD Provides training and programs in social and emotional learning that will support implementation of Freshman Academies, Advisory Programs, and Career Academies.

ADDITIONAL MNPS & SCHOOL RELATED TERMS (cont.)

- Character Development & Leadership** Develops the character and leadership skills of high school students.
- Cohesive Funding Plan** Comprehensive funding strategy that includes local, state, Federal, and private dollars.
- Comprehensive district high school improvement strategy** Plan for developing rigor, relevance, and relationships through: AVID, subject benchmarks, 9th grade counselors, cohesive funding plan, Alignment Nashville.
- Concrete and Adaptive** Enact steps, decisions and solutions according to a timeline that ensures progress while balancing commitment to the model and timeline with flexibility and necessary adaptations to local circumstances.
- Dropout Rates** The percentage of students not earning a high school diploma.
- Family Resource Centers** Assist SLCs in communicating with families.
- Ford Partnership for Advanced Studies (Ford PAS)** Based on How People Learn, an academically rigorous, standards-based program that introduces students to the concepts and skills necessary for future success.
- Graduation Rates** The percentage of students who graduate in four years.
- High School Conversion Planning Process Steps** Readiness Assessment Awareness/Constituency— Building Phase System Leadership Training and Supports Step 1: School-based planning/ facilitation for building and district leadership Step 2: School kick-off; working groups formed and activated Step 3: SLC concept development Step 4: SLC teams formed and activated Step 5: Student recruitment and placement Step 6: Facilities plan developed and finalized Step 7: Scheduling Step 8: Baseline data collection and report development Step 9: Capacity-building in curriculum and instruction, teaming leadership Step 10: Summer work to ensure strong opening.
- How People Learn National Research Council** Research-based strategies: Learner Centered, Knowledge Centered, Assessment Centered, Community Centered.
- International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma** Rigorous, off-the-shelf curriculum recognized by universities around the world and first introduced in 1968—well before globalization became a buzzword.
- Management Plan** Details the strategies, responsibilities, timeline, and project milestones.
- Nashville State Community College, Center for Information Technology Education (CITE)**
A nationally recognized leader in the development of sustained, ongoing professional development programs.
- Oasis Center, Inc.** Provides assistance in parent programs as well as assistance through its Youth Innovation Board.
- Participatory** Engages participants in the actual hands-on work of school transformation.
- PENCIL Foundation** An excellent community partner, providing after-school tutoring in mathematics and reading/language arts, PENCIL Partners for schools, and various other forms of support.

ADDITIONAL MNPS & SCHOOL RELATED TERMS (cont.)

Postsecondary education Learning beyond high school.

Project Evaluation An impact evaluation plan developed in alignment with the program goals and objectives, as delineated in Table 3.

School Improvement Plan A detailed plan of action to help a school improve in areas of need.

Student performance Helping students build attachments to their school and provide them with support to overcome obstacles while encouraging them to strive for excellence.

Subject Benchmark Program Developed set of curriculum standards that have been aligned with state and federal benchmarks.

Supported Facilitated by an on-site change coach and other technical assistants and networks of schools with experience and expertise in high school transformation.

Tough Choices Tough Times The report of the new commission on the skills of the American workforce from the National Center on Education and the Economy.

Transparent Reveals information to all participants up front and along the way the steps that need to be taken, the decisions that need to be made and the problems that need to be solved to move forward.