



# News

from the MNPS Public Information Office

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

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## **MNPS concentrates efforts to offer widespread inclusion training**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (June 10, 2009) – This summer, Metro Nashville Public Schools is concentrating efforts to provide teachers top quality training in inclusion, the practice of including students with disabilities into traditional classroom settings. More than 4,000 general and special education teachers will be eligible to take professional development courses that train teachers on effective inclusion practices. A variety of courses will be offered throughout June and July.

“Effective training is key to inclusion,” said Dr. Linda DePriest, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Support. “Without proper training, the students may be ‘placed’ in the same classroom, but they may not necessarily be ‘included.’ Students learn so much from their peers; to isolate a child with disabilities from others can severely limit his or her overall education.”

Summer professional development offerings for teachers will include training in co-teaching, differentiated instruction, response to intervention, crisis prevention intervention, and mental health. Offerings will help teachers understand the behaviors, challenges and needs of students with disabilities and how to effectively teach these students; they will help ensure students receive interventions before being referred to a special education; and they will teach de-escalation strategies.

DePriest, along with Executive Director of Special Education Debra McAdams, are charged with leading the district’s reform of special education services, one of Dr. Register’s eight areas of transformational change. Part of this reform includes incorporating more inclusive practices within all MNPS classrooms.

“The support we’re receiving from special education advocacy groups and the Mayor’s Special Education Advisory Council, as well as a Director of Schools who put special education at the forefront of his overall district plan, are instrumental elements in this reform effort,” DePriest said. “We are excited and optimistic about the opportunities that our students with disabilities will have in the coming years.”

DePriest, recently named by Register to lead instructional support for the district, spent the past year serving as Executive Director of Special Education and has worked in special education for MNPS for more than 30 years. McAdams worked closely with DePriest as the Director of Special Education during the 2008-2009

school year and was recently named DePriest's successor as Executive Director. The two have been instrumental in leading district-wide reform of special education services.

Metro Nashville Public Schools provide a range of educational opportunities to more than 75,000 students in Nashville and Davidson County. The governing body for MNPS is the Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County Board of Public Education, a nine-member group elected by residents of Metropolitan Nashville. For more information, please visit [www.mnps.org](http://www.mnps.org).

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