



COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS OF TENNESSEE

2015-16 IMPACT REPORT

Changing the Picture of Education in Tennessee



Communities
In Schools

Tennessee

CISTN.org

OUR LEADERSHIP



The past school year has been rewarding, challenging and impactful for Communities In Schools of Tennessee. While poverty continues to be a barrier for 26% of children across the state, in the 2015-16 school year, our team served nearly 10,000 students and their families, helping to equip them with the tools needed to be successful in school and beyond. Serving youth enrolled in K-12th grade, our site coordinators have been doing *whatever it takes* to unlock the potential of every student in the schools we partner with. As a result, over 92% of the students we served across the state stayed in school and 76% showed improvement in their attendance. In the upcoming year, our goal will be focused on decreasing chronic absenteeism rates across the state. We know that keeping students in school is the first step to changing the picture of their education and future.

ANNE WEBER, CEO/STATE DIRECTOR

Communities In Schools of Tennessee is a beacon of support for the students and families we serve in Memphis. With 82% of Memphis and Shelby County students living in poverty, Communities In Schools of Tennessee addresses each child's unique barriers to learning that accompany economic disparity. This past year has been one of significant growth and progress for our Memphis Affiliate. As we reflect on our results, we are motivated and encouraged by the outcomes and success stories that are highlighted in this report. In the future, we will continue building on these successes and expanding our impact throughout Memphis. Last year, with the help of our site coordinators, we saw 90% of our seniors graduate from high school. We remain committed to keeping more students in school while lighting the pathway to graduation and success both in and out of the classroom.

SONJI BRANCH, MEMPHIS AFFILIATE DIRECTOR

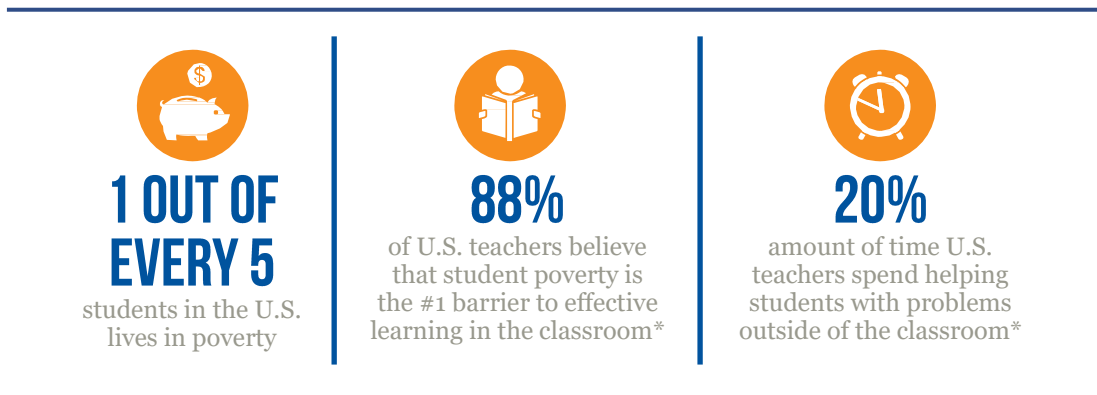


The public education sector is at a critical juncture in Nashville. With high Principal turnover and significant funding shifts, compounded by substantial transitions within Central Office, Communities In Schools of Tennessee has remained one of the few constants for many of our students and families. Over the past school year, our dedicated and compassionate site coordinators ensured that their presence not only directly impacted 249 students receiving case management, but that the entire school population of over 2,300 students and the surrounding community felt supported by the wide spectrum of services provided. This past year, 86% of our schools met their family engagement goals, continuing to build the trust of our families and strengthen the Communities In Schools of Tennessee brand among stakeholders. We look forward to deepening our current relationships while cultivating new strategic partnerships to best serve our students and their families as we walk alongside them on their path to graduation.

ERIKA BURNETT, NASHVILLE AFFILIATE DIRECTOR

THE ISSUE

Imagine wanting to go to school, but having no shoes to wear. Wanting to learn, but being too hungry to think. Wanting to graduate, but having to drop out because you need to get a job. This is the harsh reality for thousands of kids in Tennessee, as more students than ever before in our nation’s history are living in poverty. By the time you finish reading this sentence, another student will have dropped out of school, abandoning the chance to realize his or her full potential. With 1 out of 5 students living in poverty in the U.S., making economic hardship the rule rather than the exception, teachers face an enormous challenge trying to help students overcome the nonacademic barriers to learning.



*CIS/Public Opinion Strategies 2015

Living in poverty puts these students at an even greater risk of dropping out—even at the elementary school level. On average, a high school graduate in Tennessee earns \$7,762 more each year than a high school dropout. Communities In Schools of Tennessee (CISTN) is committed to eliminating the dropout crisis in our state by helping more students stay in school, graduate and become contributing members of society. CISTN believes that when we provide children with opportunities to better their circumstances through education, we move one step closer to breaking the cycle of generational poverty and improving our economy as a whole.

THE 5 BASICS

Communities In Schools (CIS) believes every child needs and deserves these five essentials



A one-on-one relationship with a caring adult



A safe place to learn and grow



A healthy start and a healthy future



A marketable skill to use upon graduation



A chance to give back to peers and the community

THE BARRIERS

10 SURPRISING REASONS STUDENTS DON'T GO TO SCHOOL



1 THEY'RE HUNGRY

When a child is hungry, he or she can't focus on school, extracurricular activities or the future.



2 THEY'RE HOMELESS

Not knowing where they are going to sleep at night may make going to school seem unimportant in comparison.



3 THEY FEEL LIKE THEY DON'T FIT IN

Kids struggling with personal identity or physical appearance suffer from low self-esteem and may become a target for bullying.



4 THEY CAN'T SEE THE BLACKBOARD

Students may give up on their school work rather than admit they can't see what the teacher is writing on the blackboard.



5 THEY CAN'T GET THERE

If students must walk through a dangerous neighborhood or lack reliable transportation, they may stay at home.



6 THEY'RE IN POOR HEALTH

Chronic illness made worse by lack of medical care or proper medication keeps many kids out of the classroom.



7 THEY NEED SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Some students can't afford a simple backpack to carry their books, let alone the basic school supplies they need at school.



8 THEY NEED A CARING ADULT IN THEIR LIFE

If a parent dies or is absent from the home, kids lose the emotional support they need to succeed in school.



9 THEY NEED TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILY

The burden of caring for a sick parent or the need to hold down a part-time job to pay for groceries can lead to frequent absences.



10 THEY DON'T HAVE PROPER SHOES OR CLOTHES

Clothes that fit, shoes without holes or a warm winter jacket are luxuries for some students.

THE SOLUTION

The barriers our students face may seem insurmountable, but the solution is simple. Young people thrive when adults care about them on a one-to-one level. Our affiliates in Memphis and Nashville deliver CIS' unique model by bringing resources inside schools – easily accessible and customized to individual students and local communities. In partnership with public schools, CISTN brings people and programs together to help change the picture of education for those trapped in poverty. Following a rigorous data driven model, dedicated staff, called site coordinators, are embedded inside each school served. Site coordinators broker and leverage existing resources in the community to ensure students' needs are met. From kindergarten to 12th grade, we do *whatever it takes* to remove barriers and help our students reimagine their future. The majority are facing a wall that has confronted so many others — generational poverty. By encouraging students who may be without role models, we help them express behavior in a healthy and positive way, checking in and connecting regularly. We show them a world beyond their barriers.

Every child has a unique story and unique needs. The CIS model was created to respond to these differences because there is no one-size-fits-all answer, and local solutions exist.

OUR UNIQUE MODEL





Living in poverty typically means struggling to obtain the most basic necessities — food, housing and clothing. Communities In Schools of Tennessee relieves those burdens so students can focus on the academic goals that will propel them forward. We do it for nearly **13,000** students across the state. Helping students identify and commit to academic goals is one key to our success. Site coordinators and students work together to set goals for attendance, behavior and coursework.

SCHOOL YEAR 2015-16 STATEWIDE RESULTS

Percentage of case-managed students that made progress toward/achieved their individualized goals



83%

behavior



87%

coursework



76%

attendance



90%

seniors graduated
(12th grade)



92%

stayed in school
(K-11th grade)

NEARLY 10,000

students and their families were
directly connected to resources

906

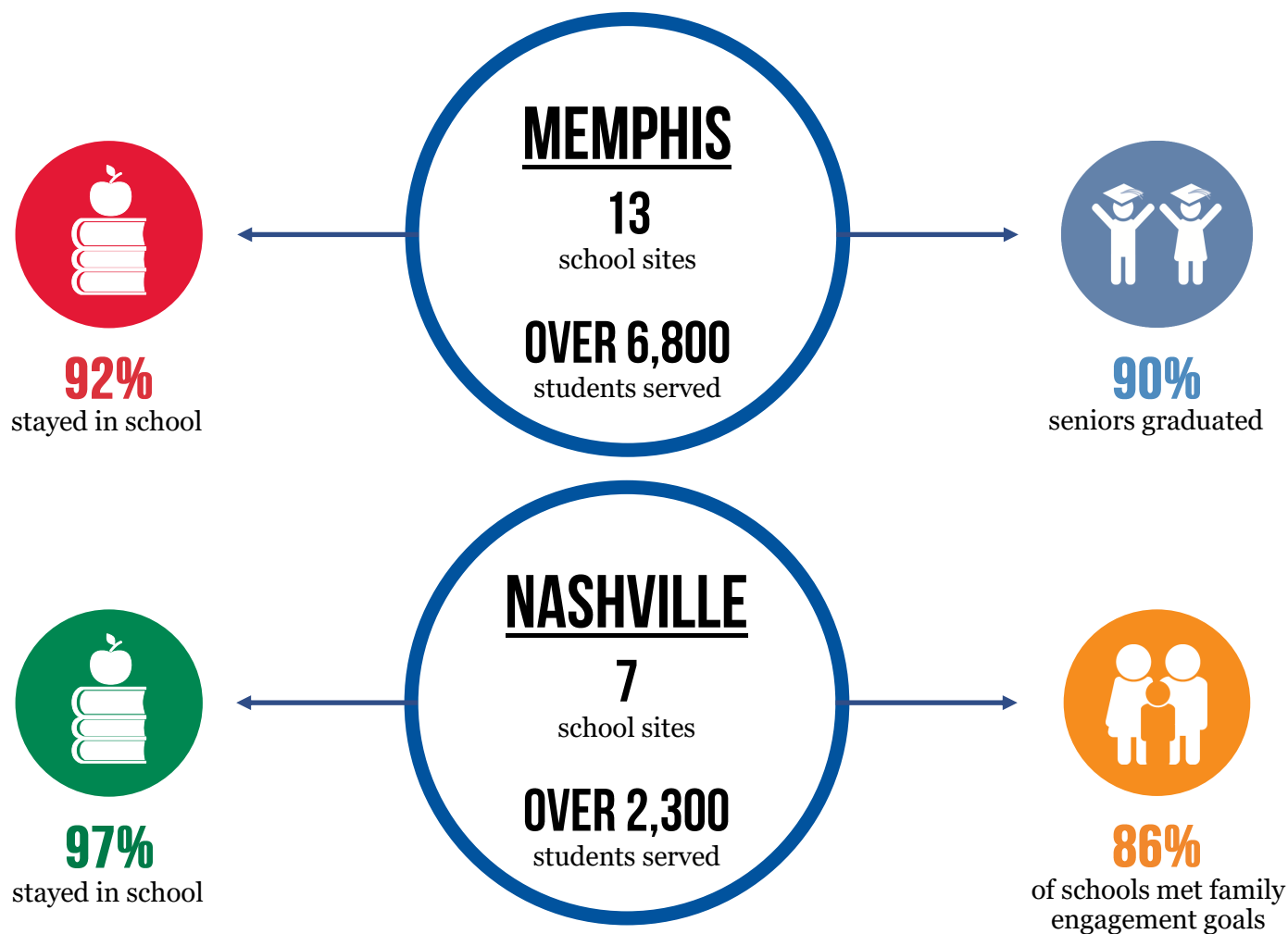
case-managed students

65

community organizations
partnered with CISTN

OUR AFFILIATES

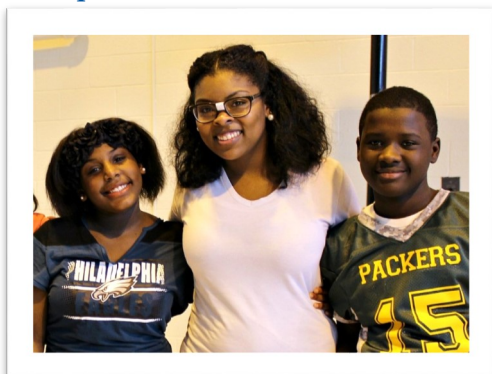
Communities In Schools of Tennessee is the hub, the glue that pulls all the pieces together, putting students at the center. Our affiliates in Memphis and Nashville establish relationships with local organizations and volunteers to provide resources and services to our students and partner schools.



OUR SITE COORDINATORS

BREONNA PONDER: CHANGING SCHOOL CULTURE BY DEVELOPING ROLE MODELS & ENCOURAGING PEER SUPPORT

Memphis, Tennessee



As the saying goes – it takes a village to raise a child. CISTN Site Coordinator Breonna Ponder not only succeeded in building and maintaining a community of caring adults to help the students at her school achieve this year, but she also encouraged kids to join the “village” themselves to support one another. In her first year as a site coordinator and CISTN’s first year at her school, Ms. Ponder seamlessly transitioned herself into her campus culture working closely with the attendance and behavior teams and administration to provide the most effective assistance for her students. Through her collaboration with school staff, she strategically targeted the students most in need of her individual attention – especially around behavior and family engagement. Through establishing partnerships with existing resources available in the community with organizations like

Girls Inc., Anaya, Young Man University and the Salvation Army, in addition to providing one-on-one attention to students needing her individual support, Ms. Ponder helped over 400 students in her first year. Not only did she assemble a supportive lineup of adults and community resources to change the picture of her students’ education, but she charged the kids themselves with becoming role models in their school through her Wildcat Ambassadors group. Select scholars were taught life skills including team building, leadership skills, proper etiquette and appropriate manners which they took into classrooms to empower their peers. Ms. Ponder met and surpassed her behavior improvement goal for the school and truly carried out our mission of surrounding every student with a community of support, empowering them to succeed in school and in life.

KATIE FEY: CONNECTING WITH CAREGIVERS TO HELP BUILD A SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Nashville, Tennessee

At CISTN, we know that greater parental involvement in a student’s life promotes greater student success. After reviewing the results from the previous year’s parent survey, CISTN Site Coordinator Katie Fey knew there was a need to increase family engagement within her school. At the beginning of the year, she started the Family Involvement Team (FIT), the school’s first parent group as a way to engage parents and caregivers in their child’s school experience. Ms. Fey lead monthly FIT meetings to provide updates on the latest school happenings, opportunities to hear about community resources and for parents/caregivers to sign up to organize, plan and volunteer at school events. Throughout the year, FIT and CISTN sponsored six school events. By the end of the year, 54% of parents had attended at least one school event and 30% had attended two or more events. Ms. Fey sent surveys home throughout the year to get feedback from the parents. As a result of the collected feedback, three parent leaders in FIT formed the Parent Advisory Council. With Ms. Fey’s help, the Parent Advisory Council met with the school’s principal and arranged a meeting at the end of the school year at which over 50 parents attended and voiced their feedback in an open discussion with the principal. By the end of the school year, the perception of parent engagement at the school had increased from 36% of parents being actively involved in the school in the previous year to 78% of parents being actively involved at the school in 2015-16. Thanks to her dedication and passion for empowering others, Ms. Fey continues to make a difference in the lives of the students, families and school community she serves.



OUR STUDENT STORIES

FINDING HOPE IN THE FACE OF LOSS

Memphis, Tennessee



After Tevin's parents passed away, both within one year, his remaining family began to distance themselves from him. Suddenly the high school senior found himself having to maintain a house, car and pay bills with very little income – all while trying to attend school. Tevin needed help with basic needs – such as utility assistance, mortgage assistance, state identification and social security cards – as well as obtaining the death certificates for both of his parents. As a result, Tevin became chronically absent in the first semester of his senior year and was not on track to graduate. When he was introduced to the CISTN site coordinator at his school, she was eager to help. “Despite his situation, he seemed humble and optimistic,” she said. Tevin's site coordinator connected him with agencies capable of helping him overcome the barriers he faced on his path to graduation. Together, he and the site coordinator worked to develop a plan that helped him makeup the work he had missed and get back on track towards graduation. As a result of their efforts, Tevin's

attendance improved, he completed his FAFSA application and applied to several colleges. At the end of the school year he graduated from high school on-time and plans to attend Southwest Community College in Memphis this Fall.

DISCOVERING A NEW BEGINNING

Nashville, Tennessee

Transitioning to a new school can be a difficult experience for any student, and was especially tough for 7th grader Quinton who transferred schools midway through the year. Without his friends or the familiar setting he had once known, Quinton began acting out in school. He had difficulty focusing in the classroom and would commonly interrupt the learning environment and those around him. As a result, Quinton was referred to the CISTN site coordinator at the school to work with him on improving his behavior and getting to the root cause of his issues. In their first meeting, Quinton sat down with the site coordinator and admitted that he was contemplating dropping out. The site coordinator got in touch with his mother and worked with both of them to identify Quinton's primary needs and strengths. Together, they developed a plan and the site coordinator connected Quinton with services in the community to support him. Soon, the site coordinator and school team realized that because he had previously been held back a grade level, Quinton was struggling to connect with his peers and was unmotivated in the classroom. After a thorough review, the school team determined that Quinton would benefit from aligning with peers his age and moved him to the 8th grade. Shortly after, his behavior and school engagement improved tremendously. He was more interested in learning and improved his behavior in the classroom. In addition, Quinton was able to take advantage of other CISTN led initiatives for 8th graders promoting college awareness and career exploration. Quinton participated in opportunities to learn about planning, goal-setting, college, careers, and professional behavior environments. By the end of the year, he was promoted to 9th grade. Thanks to CISTN's work to help him stay in school, Quinton is now on track to graduate and has set a future goal of attending college.

OUR PRIORITIES

In December 2015, the Senate passed the Every Student Succeeds Act, a major bipartisan overhaul of the nation's federal education law. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the first major restructuring of federal education law in almost 15 years. The Communities In Schools (CIS) national organization made a strong case to Congress to support local programs proven to keep kids in school, improve academic achievement and stay on the path to graduation. Among the most important measures in the new law is a framework allowing local communities to tap into critically needed resources to help low income students get the help they need to stay in school. The new law includes specific language allowing Title 1 funding for integrated student supports (wraparound services) - a local and school-based approach that removes academic and non-academic barriers to student achievement. It also enables local educators to access competitive grants to work with integrated student supports providers like CIS and encourages local communities to utilize evidence-based programs proven to help low-income students succeed in school. Over the next year, Communities In Schools of Tennessee (CISTN) will be working with the state and local school districts to help them leverage this new flexibility in funding to support CISTN's services providing evidence-based programs to achieve school turnaround and improve academic outcomes.



OUR STANDARDS

The CIS Total Quality System (TQS) is a comprehensive set of initiatives, policies and protocols that guides the operations and growth of CIS' network of affiliates. TQS includes initiatives aimed at strengthening organizational performance and information for how state and affiliate offices are structured. Other components include the accreditation and reaccreditation programs, which set baseline standards for nonprofit operations and minimum requirements for our work in schools. TQS policies and initiatives are designed to define the CIS Model and reinforce our commitment to evidence-based practices and accountability.

During the 2015-16 year, CISTN underwent the TQS accreditation process to ensure our organization is successfully implementing the standards set by our National Office. In July 2016, CISTN officially received its approved accreditation status from the National Office — a huge feat. This accreditation is a testament to CISTN's commitment to executing best practices in non-profit business operations and delivering effective programs that have a demonstrable impact on students. These standards ensure that our affiliates provide programs and implements proven strategies. Since CISTN can now verify fidelity to the CIS model, we can more directly connect our work in Tennessee to the successful CIS programs described in several third-party evaluations of CIS.

OUR SUPPORTERS

We continue to be a cost-effective solution to the dropout problem and support from local investors make our successes possible. It is only through the generosity of the community that we can sustain our work in Tennessee and end the dropout crisis. To all of our supporters, thank you for your contributions to our FY16 annual campaign and helping us to further our mission throughout Tennessee.

Beth & Dave Alexander
Altria
Amazon Smile
Katie Anderson & Matt Dykstra
Malika & Greg Anderson

Anonymous
AT&T
Bryn & Fagdeba Bakoyema
Bank of America Charitable Foundation

Lesley & David Bartley
Justine & Joe Bass

Dana Battaglia
Mary Boese
The Boulevard Bolt

Sonji Branch
Ian Buchanan

Stephanie Butler
CAA Foundation
Katie & Diego Castellon
Hal Cato

Alice & Tom Chapman
Hayley & Hank Clay
Scott & Pam Clayton
The Community Foundation
of Middle Tennessee

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Kate & Tom Elasy
Callie & Lucas Elliott

Rob Elliott
Shary & Rod Essig

Emily & Jim Flautt
Adrianna Flax
Madeleine & Tim Fouts
The Frist Foundation
Deon Gaines

Inetta & Landers Gaines
Tamara & Andy Graham
Kathleen & John Harkey

Lindsay & Jay Harper
Sara Beth Myers & John Haubenreich
HCA Foundation

Ellie & Josh Hedrick
Carol Hinkley
Thomas Hinkley

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IBM

Lauren & Lance Ingwersen
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Becky & Larry Lloyd

Dan & Margaret Maddox
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Rick Martin
Jocelyn & Sean McCray
Sherry McKinzey

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Margie & Jackson Moore

Valerie & Christopher Moth
Suzy Newman

Jerry & Nina Patton Family
Foundation

Mary & Mark Pierce
Pilot Flying J

Publix Super Markets Charities
Brenda & Colin Reed
Micaela & Sam Reed

Ryman Hospitality Properties
Foundation
Jamie Saxon

Scarlett Family Foundation
Julie Simone & Stephen Carr
Christy & Steve Singleton

Barbara Stengel
Stephen Susano

Michelle Taylor
Trinity Lutheran Church
Ute & Ed Tucker

Kirbi Tucker
Cal Turner Family Foundation
Kristi Turner

UBS
Anne Weber

Tim Weber
Bill Weber
Whitney Weeks & Robert Jack

Wells Fargo Foundation
Alexis & Richard Whitcomb
Heather & Morgan Wills

Woodmont Christian Church
Glenda & David Yarbrough

THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Every dollar invested
in CISTN creates
\$11.60
of economic benefit
for the community



Dropouts cost
taxpayers an estimated
\$292,000
as they're more likely to
need public assistance
and/or end up incarcerated



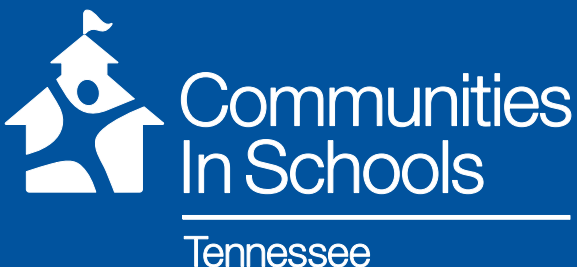
OUR 2016-17 SCHOOL PARTNERS

MEMPHIS

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Aspire Coleman | Cornerstone Prep Denver Campus |
| Cornerstone Prep Lester Campus | GRAD Academy Memphis |
| Grandview Heights Middle School | Hamilton High School |
| Humes Preparatory Academy | Kirby Middle School |
| Klondike Preparatory Academy | Lester Prep Middle School |
| Melrose High School | MLK Prep Academy |
| Power Center Academy Elementary School | Power Center Academy Middle School |
| Promise Academy Hollywood Campus | Riverview K-8 School |
| Treadwell Middle School | Trezevant High School |
| Westside Achievement Middle School | Wooddale Middle School |

NASHVILLE

| | |
|--|---|
| Caldwell Enhanced Option Elementary | John Trotwood Moore Middle Prep |
| KIPP Academy Nashville | KIPP Nashville Collegiate High School |
| Kirkpatrick Enhanced Option Elementary | Stratford STEM Magnet School—Lower Campus |
| Valor Collegiate Academies | Warner Enhanced Option Elementary |



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