

TRANSFORMING FUTURES

REGION 5 QUARTERLY UPDATE

SPRING 2024

Knox County Schools cannot achieve the bold goals outlined in the Region 5 Way without the support from families, community leaders, and community partners. Schools are extensions of the communities in which they reside, and leveraging the powerful resources and wisdom of community partners, like the United Way and the Community Schools initiative, will give students their best chance at success.

There are 10 Region 5 Community Schools, and in just the first semester of the Region 5 Way, this partnership has resulted in:

- Greater student and family engagement, including 136 participants in the Steering Committee and 1,512 volunteer hours;
- Expanded enrichment opportunities, such as Healthy Lifestyle experiences, Vocational and College exposure, Social-Emotional learning, STEM opportunities, and more;
- Increased collaboration through 68 family and community events; and
- Additional student supports like Family Stability Assistance and School Readiness Supports.

We are grateful for our collaboration with the United Way to support Region 5 students, and we look forward to the partnerships that are yet to come!

Dr. Dexter Murphy
Region 5 Director



Sallee Reynolds
Region 5 Supervisor



STRATEGY IN PRACTICE

My teammates and I completed the survey relating to Transformation Thursday where we asked for more time to plan. We have been learning more about internalizing our curriculum and desperately needed time to do more internalizing to ensure that we were able to give our students instruction that allows them the opportunity to continue to increase their knowledge and growth. The change to the focus of Transformation Thursdays has allowed us more of this time.

Lindsay Chapman
Teacher, Lonsdale Elementary

HIGH ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

The Region 5 Strategic Plan elevates the need to provide all students with high academic expectations. The district is centered on providing access to grade-level aligned instruction by engaging all students in enhanced learning and providing opportunities for advancement.

Key Accomplishments

- Using positive feedback from stakeholders about Q2 Transformation Thursday, the sessions transitioned to a time for teachers to routinely internalize curriculum materials to effectively implement instruction and provide purposeful practice opportunities for all students to increase learning outcomes
- RTI working group reviewed scheduling and staffing options to make recommendations to schools for ways to meet the updated RTI guidance from TDOE for academic interventions
- Proposed Pre-K expansion plan shared with district executive leaders for input and feedback

Next Steps

- The Pre-K working group is collaborating with stakeholders to determine the next steps for sustainability of the Pre-K expansion proposal
- The High Academic Expectations team continues to reflect on feedback from teachers and leaders in Region 5 to refine and strengthen support structures that impact student learning

RECRUIT & RETAIN ELITE EDUCATORS

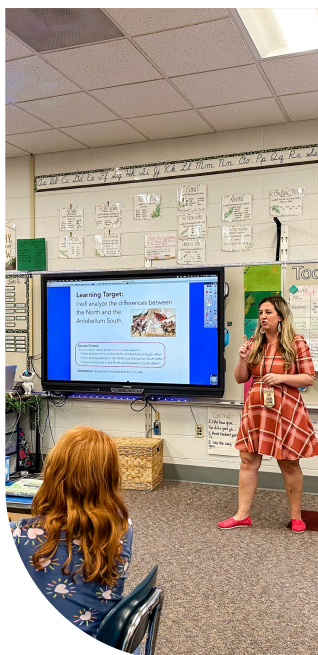
Region 5 has struggled to recruit and retain elite educators, and KCS is committed to employing uniquely qualified and highly effective teachers in Region 5 and retaining them with ongoing strategic support.

Key Accomplishments

- Created a draft of a Region 5 Interview Handbook to assist principals in identifying high-quality candidates that match the Portrait of a Region 5 Educator
- Principals met with District Leadership to think through the process of flexible resources to help retain valuable staff in Region 5
- Christenberry Elementary was named a Tennessee Reward School

Next Steps

- Finalize Region 5 Interview Handbook and an opportunity for flexible use of allocated resources
- Begin hiring for 2024-25 school year



STRATEGY IN PRACTICE

One of the district's priorities is to have Great Educators in Every School. At Christenberry, we are growing Elite Educators. You cannot become elite by accident. We are intentional about professional development and constantly sharpening our saw. Our staff is dedicated to serving the students and families in our community. The student growth we have seen validates that our staff is making the best instructional decisions for our students to help them overcome perceived barriers.

Dr. Tonya Cash
Principal, Christenberry Elementary

STRATEGY IN PRACTICE



The staff, students, and families at Holston Middle School are excited to undergo the Tennessee STEM Designation process! With professional development beginning in April 2024 for the staff—as well as STEM enrichment courses starting Fall 2024—we hope that Knox County Schools' first STEM-designated middle school will be a shining example of STEM education in East Knoxville!

Katie Lutton
Principal, Holston Middle School

For Q4 Transformation Thursdays, staff will pivot their focus to The 865 Academies, including the implementation of career empowerment initiatives. They will also begin laying the groundwork for STEM education by providing foundational training coupled with Design Thinking activities.

COLLEGE AND CAREER PATHWAYS

College and career pathways to prepare Region 5 students for high school and beyond have long been inadequate. Now, career exposure begins in preschool and continues through graduation.

Key Accomplishments

- Developed a plan for Q4 Transformation Thursdays that will center around career awareness for grades K-5, career exploration for 6-8 grade, and a deep-dive into career empowerment for 9-12 graders
- Continued working to negotiate an IB contract for Sarah Moore Greene, Vine Middle Magnet, and Austin-East Magnet High
- Organized college visits, including many HBCUs for Fulton and Austin-East students

Next Steps

- Implement Q4 Transformation Thursday sessions in Region 5 schools
- Continue work on Holston Middle's STEM School designation
- Schedule initial trainings for Holston staff around STEM
- Seek input and publish the College and Career Readiness rubric

MEETING WHOLE-CHILD NEEDS

Region 5 has refocused the support for students by strengthening their implementation of a Whole Child Support Team in each school. These multi-disciplinary teams tailor Tier 1 supports to students in the areas of academics, behavior, emotional needs, and social skills.

Key Accomplishments

- Facilitated Whole Child Support Team trainings to better align with individual schools' Small Learning Communities (SLC) structures
- Fulton High is on pace to have their lowest chronic absenteeism rate in 8 years
- Students participating in the Beaumont Walking School Bus have significantly decreased their tardies
- Maynard Elementary's attendance incentives are reducing student absences

Next Steps

- Collaborating with schools to begin creating Behavior Support system training action plan for the 2024-25 school year
- Continuing the IIRP (International Institute of Restorative Practices) work into Phase 4 for each of the five selected schools



STRATEGY IN PRACTICE

The Walking School Bus was created to address attendance issues within our Parental Responsibility Zone. Many of our families living nearby face barriers in getting their students to school consistently. Since starting the Walking School Bus, we have seen a decrease in our school-wide chronic absenteeism rate each month compared to last school year, as well as a drastic decrease in tardies for students that participate. One student has 57 fewer tardies this year than last year!

Sara Roberts
School Social Worker, Beaumont Magnet

The Region 5 Way

TRANSFORMING FUTURES - *THE REGION 5 WAY*

Region Five is championing our students with the courage and skill to move forward and thrive in tomorrow's world! Follow our progress and find contact information for the Region 5 Support Team at knoxschools.org/Region5.



Dr. Andrew Brown
Assistant Superintendent of
Student Success



Dr. Dexter Murphy
Region 5 Director



Sallee Reynolds
Region 5 Supervisor