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GOVERNOR

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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CANDICE MCQUEEN
COMMISSIONER

February 5, 2018

Mr. Dorsey Hopson
Shelby County Schools
160 S. Hollywood St.
Memphis, TN 38112

Dear Superintendent Hopson,

Since 2012, Tennessee has identified its lowest performing 5 percent of schools and awarded competitive grants to districts and schools to implement plans for turnaround. As we developed our continuum of intervention and support for our lowest performing schools in our state Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan, much of what we have learned is embedded in our model. First and foremost, we know that improving low-performing schools is challenging work and requires additional capacity, funding, and opportunity to innovate. Tennessee's theory of action is an evidence-based one that will guide the priorities for the state's turnaround efforts.

Tennessee's system of performance management for Priority schools will operate through a newly created school improvement continuum and be support by a new Office of School Improvement (OSI). The continuum defines three tracks of intervention for Priority schools identified for comprehensive support based on multiple factors.

Alpha Track

Priority schools that have been identified on the two most recent Priority Lists and have earned a composite TVAAS score of 3 or less. These schools are eligible for the state-led intervention by the Achievement School District (ASD). Schools in the Alpha track are reviewed based on feeder pattern, success rank/rate, graduation rate, and other relevant indicators to determine whether Alpha 1 or Alpha 2 is the more appropriate track of intervention. Schools identified as Alpha 1 will begin planning for ASD intervention. Schools identified as Alpha 2 will implement a specific intervention as determined by the Commissioner which may include district-led charter conversion, continuing a current intervention, closure, shared governance, or ASD planning.

Beta Track:

Priority schools that have been identified on two most recent Priority lists and demonstrate evidence of improvement or progress. For the 2017-18 school year, schools with TVAAS composites of 4 or 5 or success rates of greater than 15% for K-8 schools and greater than 9% for high schools were placed on the placed on Beta track. These schools are not immediately eligible for the ASD and will work in partnership with TDOE to ensure that the plan for intervention is appropriate based on identified need and level of evidence.

Delta Track:

Priority schools that have been identified on one Priority list. These schools will undergo a rigorous school improvement planning process, including a readiness review led by TDOE leadership and will implement new, district-led, evidence-based interventions. These schools are not immediately eligible for the ASD.

The current priority schools in the Shelby County School district will be on the following intervention tracks for the 2017-18 school year.

Priority School	Intervention Track
A B Hill Elementary School	Delta
A. Maceo Walker Middle School	Delta
Douglass High School	Delta
Georgian Hills Middle School	Delta
Grandview Heights Middle	Delta
Holmes Road Elementary School	Delta
LaRose Elementary School	Delta
Wooddale High School	Delta
Sheffield Elementary School	Beta
Raleigh-Egypt High School	Beta
Lucie E. Campbell Elementary School	Beta
Melrose High School	Beta
Sherwood Middle School	Beta
Westwood High School	Beta
American Way Middle School	Alpha 1 or Alpha 2-District-led charter conversion****
Hawkins Mill Elementary School	Alpha 2- Recommended for Closure
Hamilton High School	Alpha 2-Continue current intervention*
Riverview Middle School	Alpha 2-Continue current intervention*
Geeter Middle School	Alpha 2-Continue current intervention*
Magnolia Elementary School	Alpha 2-Continue current intervention**
Trezevant High School	Alpha 2-Continue current intervention*

*For those schools designated as Alpha 2-Continue current intervention, the state will engage with the district to receive frequent progress reports and conduct school visits to monitor school progress during the remainder of this school year.

**The state is aware that Magnolia Elementary is currently undergoing a consolidation plan with Alcy Elementary and results and enrollment for the combined school will be tracked.

***For schools recommended as Alpha 2 closure, the district shall provide a response and timeline for board action to the state.

****The district may choose to lead a charter conversion for American Way Middle or opt for Achievement School District intervention. Formal notification of the district's intervention choice must be received by March 15, 2018. Additionally, should the district opt for a charter conversion, a charter agreement must be entered into by December 31, 2018.

Tennessee's next Priority list will be released in Fall 2018. At that time, a school's status and/or intervention track will be re-assessed based on annual proof points. The 2018 Priority Schools and their districts will have an opportunity to apply for the School Improvement Grant (SIG) and/or an iZone grant.

We appreciate your district's efforts to provide support and resources for improving outcomes for Priority school students and look forward to partnering with you in these efforts. Please feel free to reach out to our executive director, Ginnae Harley (Ginnae.Harley@tn.gov), of the Office of School Improvement with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,



Dr. Candice McQueen
Commissioner of Education