



Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County, TN

Legislation Text

File #: RS2020-695, **Version:** 2

A Resolution in support of Metro Nashville Public Schools full implementation of sustainable practices throughout the school district.

WHEREAS, environmental stewardship is a priority for the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County as evidenced through our parks, trails, waterways, open spaces, and other natural spaces, and Nashville's participation in the Global Covenant of Mayors; and

WHEREAS, children who develop a positive relationship with nature are more likely to become tomorrow's stewards of our natural heritage; children who have safe access to these public outdoor spaces are more resilient; and all children should feel welcome at all of Nashville and Davidson County's parks, pools, zoos, nature centers, trails, waterways, and other open spaces; and

WHEREAS, all communities that have access to nature experience educational, emotional, and physical benefits. Communities in disadvantaged areas receive even greater benefits from nature through improved health equity, lower rates of mortality and disease, and increased food security as families gain knowledge and ability to grow and preserve fresh food for themselves; and

WHEREAS, Metro Nashville Public Schools is confident that through these forward steps it can help the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County achieve its goals for our city to reach zero-waste, a reduced carbon footprint, and an increased tree canopy; and

WHEREAS, Metro Nashville Public Schools has the potential to make positive, tangible environmental change in Nashville and Davidson County by teaching students to be stewards of their local and global communities, the earth, and its resources; and

WHEREAS, Metro Nashville Public Schools has seen that when students experience a culture in their schools that is rich in sustainability, outdoor education, and social-emotional learning, they experience and benefit from dramatic academic improvement, are more confident, better problem solvers, more creative, and become involved local citizens; and

WHEREAS, Metro Nashville Public Schools is working to develop and implement a systemic framework to coordinate these efforts and improve student learning and involvement as the school district's culture moves to one of sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has created a Sustainability Advisory Committee, consisting of people within the city government, environmental community, and school district to map out the path that Metro Nashville Public Schools can take to implement sustainable practices and work to support the city's sustainability goals; and

WHEREAS, Metro Nashville Public Schools has shown that moving towards sustainability will benefit our community in many ways, not the least of which is good stewardship of taxpayer monies and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Nashville Public Schools community already includes representatives of stakeholders - students, teachers, administration, parents, members of the local community, higher education, business, industry, and non-profit organizations currently engaged in this type of work; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation finalized Tennessee's newest state recreation plan, Tennessee 2020: Vision for Parks, People, and Landscapes, a comprehensive planning document focused on the future of Tennessee's parks, people, and landscapes. The plan documents the most critical needs facing conservation and recreation over the next 10 years including connecting children with nature. In the chapter on Environmental Education, the plan calls for the development and implementation of a Tennessee Environmental Literacy Plan to ensure environmental literacy among all students in Tennessee and to provide Tennessee teachers the resources needed to integrate local environmental topics into every subject at every grade level; and

WHEREAS, in February 2010, the Tennessee General Assembly passed a formal Resolution adopting the Tennessee Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (TCOBOR) and supporting the work of the ECO-TN Coalition. The TCOBOR states that "Every child, before entering high school, should have the opportunity to walk in the woods, play outside, explore nature, watch wildlife, grow a garden, splash in the water, camp under the stars, learn to swim, climb a tree, go fishing, fly a kite, and visit a farm"; and

WHEREAS, the Metro Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights has been personalized to Nashville and Davidson County and was created using the TCOBOR as well as examples from other cities; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting and proper that the Metropolitan Council go on record as supporting Metro Nashville Public Schools' full implementation of sustainable practices throughout the school district, including the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as congratulating and endorsing Metro Nashville Public Schools for their work to implement sustainable practices, including outdoor education throughout the district, and strongly encourages a continuation of these efforts.

Section 2. The Metropolitan Council of Nashville and Davidson enthusiastically supports this Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights in which every child has the right to:

Ride a bike - Splash in a creek - Fish in a pond or stream

Hike a trail or walk in the woods - Enjoy a campfire and make s'mores - Camp under the stars

Discover plants and animals in a park - Explore nature - Play in the mud

Hug an old tree - Plant a tree - Jump in a pile of leaves

Section 3. The Metropolitan Council Office is directed to prepare a copy of this Resolution to be presented to the members of the Metro Nashville Public Schools School Board and the Superintendent of Schools Dr. Adrienne Battle.

Section 4. This Resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the welfare of The Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.