

JACKSON-MADISON COUNTY SCHOOLS

YEAR IN REVIEW

2025-2026



The Superintendent's Message

Redefining Momentum

June 30, 2026

Our school system is experiencing the type of stability, growth, and progress that reshapes what education looks like in Jackson and Madison County. This progress is real, it's measurable, and it's something our families, employees, and community partners can feel. As we continue building on that momentum, it is important that our identity reflects the district we have become — not the one people remember from years past.

Today, I am proud to share **three major updates** that represent the next step in our evolution as a school system: a new district website, a new district logo, and a year-long theme that will guide our communication and storytelling. Together, these elements form a unified identity that reflects who we are and where we are going.

Our **new logo** retires a long-standing emblem that has served us for many years. In its place, we are introducing a simple and modern design that aligns our district colors with those of the City of Jackson and Madison County — our parent entities and strongest community partners. This alignment strengthens our shared identity, and brings our visual brand in line with the progress happening across our schools and community.

Alongside the new logo, we are launching our yearlong theme: **Redefining Momentum**. This theme captures the story of a district that has grown stronger, more stable, and more focused on what our students and schools can achieve. It reflects a stability that has unified our system, expanded opportunities for students, and created a culture of purpose that continues to move us forward. Redefining Momentum is more than a tagline — it is a statement about who we are becoming.

This rebrand also arrives at a time when we are planning significant investments in our facilities. As part of the **FY27 budget**, we have included funding for architectural designs for renovation projects at South Side High School, North Side High School, and JCM Elementary (formerly Alexander). These projects represent our commitment to keep the momentum going.

Stay tuned for additional details. And as we continue this work together, our new brand will help us tell that story with clarity and community pride. On behalf of the Board, I thank you for your continued support of the Jackson-Madison County School System.

Here's to our seventh year together!
-M



Marlon D. King
Dr. Marlon D. King
Superintendent



2025-2026 Quick Overview

A year of advancing readiness, expanding opportunity, and elevating student success across all schools.



**26
Schools**



**13,052
Students**

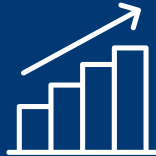


**Up 546 students
since 2020**

3,710
*Middle & High
students in Career
& Technical classes*



**875 Grads
in 2026**



**93.1%
Grad Rate***

***Up 14.8% since 2020**



Academic Achievement

Scholarship growth — Seniors earned \$44.6 million in scholarships, reflecting stronger academic preparation and expanded postsecondary advising.

ACT performance — More than 170 students reached the ACT 30+ benchmark, continuing a multi year upward trend.

Early college success — Students completed 8,900+ college credit hours through dual enrollment and Early College programs.

Literacy momentum — Students logged 2.4 million literacy minutes in districtwide reading initiatives, supporting measurable gains in reading proficiency.



Workforce Readiness

Industry certifications — Students earned 784 industry recognized certifications across health science, manufacturing, IT, and automotive pathways.

Work based learning — Students completed real world internships and paid apprenticeships with regional employers, building job skills and professional experience.

STEM and robotics growth — Robotics participation expanded from 12 to 51 schools, supported by new STEM partnerships with local industry.



Student Engagement

Athletics participation increases — More students engaged in athletics, including expanded elementary sports and new high school offerings like girls' flag football.

Arts and performance involvement — Students participated in band, choir, theater, and visual arts programs that showcased talent across the district.

The King Sized Rewards initiative recognized students with strong attendance, helping drive districtwide reductions in chronic absenteeism.

Super Bash celebration for Madison's top ranking!

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Madison Academic students celebrated in style at the Super Bash, hosted by Superintendent Dr. Marlon King to honor the school's recognition as **the #1 public high school in West Tennessee and #7 in Tennessee** by Niche.com.

Superintendent's ACT 30+ Program expanded: Silver and Gold Reward Cards

[WATCH NOW](#)

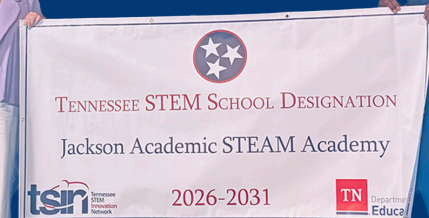
Hear from students!



Nearly 200 JMCSS high school students were recognized during the ACT Reward Card Roadshow, a districtwide celebration honoring students who are outperforming the state and redefining academic excellence in West Tennessee. The Roadshow marked the official expansion of the Superintendent's ACT 30+ Program — known for its prestigious Black Card — to now include Silver and Gold Reward Cards for students scoring between 21 and 29 on the ACT.

JASA makes History with State STEM Designation

Jackson Academic STEAM Academy has been awarded the prestigious STEM Designation by the Tennessee Department of Education, recognizing the school's excellence in high quality, integrated STEM education. JASA is the first virtual school in Tennessee to earn the Tennessee STEM School Designation, and is poised to lead the way in delivering rigorous, high quality STEM instruction in a virtual setting.



Rose Hill wins National Championship



The Rose Hill Middle School Greenpower team captured the 2026 Intermediate Stock Division National Championship in May. With the win, Rose Hill Middle School is the first Greenpower National Champion from the state of Tennessee! Greenpower Racing combines the academic rigor of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics with the nail-biting excitement of competitive racing.

\$44 Million in Scholarships for Class of 2026



The Class of 2026 earned more than \$44 million in scholarships, opening doors to colleges, careers, and opportunities across the country. Students also completed 8,935 college credit hours through dual enrollment and early postsecondary opportunities, demonstrating their commitment to preparing for life beyond high school.

Toyota EM2 Institute Expands to JCM-ECH



High school students across JMCSS will have access to advanced manufacturing technology, thanks to a **\$100,000 donation from Toyota Tennessee**. This grant will support a new STEM lab at JCM Early College High.

"The Toyota EM2 Institute gives students access to real-world skills that open doors to incredible careers right here in West Tennessee, and we see the value of expanding this opportunity to high school students," said Todd Williams, president of Toyota Tennessee.

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Facilities and Organizational Growth

Pope School held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark its grand reopening, a milestone more than 30 years in the making. Superintendent Dr. Marlon King praised the effort, highlighting the commitment to providing students and teachers with spaces that support advanced learning and technology access. Dr. King noted that former Madison County Mayor Jimmy Harris was a key supporter and champion of the project, helping bring the vision to life. **Serving Pre-K through eighth grade, Pope School is now the district's largest and most diverse school**, with 15 languages spoken.

"This is more than new buildings—it's a bold commitment to academic access, community pride, and long-term economic impact."

- Dr. Marlon King

The community Project: In addition to Pope, and in keeping with the mission to be good stewards of public resources, JMCSS is in the process of transforming the former Madison Academic building—previously home to JCM and the historic Jackson High School—into the new Central Administration Building, creating a centralized hub for district operations in 2026.



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**New PreK-8
Pope School
Campus Opens**

Facilities and Organizational Growth

Hub City Central Athletic Complex Opens

The Jackson–Madison County School System celebrated a historic milestone with the grand opening of the **Hub City Central Athletic Complex—West Tennessee’s newest showpiece**, where downtown meets East Jackson. On Thursday, October 2, 2025, board members joined Superintendent Dr. Marlon King, local dignitaries, and community partners for a ribbon cutting and community open house. That evening, Dr. King and Jackson Mayor Scott Conger recognized a distinguished group of JCM alumni from government, business, the arts, communications, and sports, including **former NFL greats “Too Tall” Jones, Al Wilson, and Artis Hicks**. The celebration continued Friday night as JCM christened its new home with a 41–0 victory over Gibson County, launching a new era for athletics in Jackson.



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Leaders Strengthens JMCSS at State of the Schools

Leaders Credit Union delivered its annual \$10,000 donation during the State of the Schools Convocation at Oman Arena. What happens in our classrooms ultimately shapes what happens in our community, and Leaders exemplifies that truth. As a champion of financial freedom and community involvement, Leaders Credit Union helps make JMCSS stronger through sustained corporate partnership and genuine investment in public education.



King-Sized Rewards Helps Fight Chronic Absenteeism

Superintendent Dr. Marlon King launched a new initiative to combat chronic absenteeism by celebrating schools with the lowest absence rates. Once a week, the Chronicle highlighted the top-performing schools. Every nine weeks, the schools with the lowest chronic absenteeism received a major prize from Dr. King. This friendly competition encouraged consistent attendance and gave all schools a chance to rise to the top!



IEP2 Longevity Bonuses Continue for Employees

As part of our unwavering commitment to ALL employees through the Investing in Every Employee Progression Plan (IEP2), JMCSS continued longevity pay. Eligible employees received \$100 for every consecutive year of service. The underlying factor in improving student achievement and school culture is high-quality employees.

Arts in the Dark Illuminates Creativity



At the Malesus STEM Innovation Center, the lights dimmed and creativity took center stage. On Tuesday, October 28, 2025, JMCSS presented "Arts in the Dark" — a first-of-its-kind collaboration between the district's Fine Arts and Innovation departments. This immersive production combined choral ensembles, jazz bands, percussion groups, color guards, dancers, and theater students — all performing with minimal light to create a visually stunning atmosphere.

Third Annual Toyota Hub City Grand Prix



The Third Annual Toyota Hub City Grand Prix roared into Rockabillys Stadium on Saturday, November 8, 2025, bringing together students from seven middle and high schools for an electrifying day of STEM-driven competition. District front-runners included Rose Hill, Jackson Academic STEAM Academy (JASA), and Liberty Technology High School. Thanks to the tremendous support of Toyota TN, the event drew competitors from as far away as Huntsville, Alabama.

Art at the Downs Showcases K-12 Talent



The District Art Show was held Tuesday, April 15, at Madison Downs. This special event showcased the extraordinary creativity of students from across the district, with select artwork available for purchase. The beautiful setting of Madison Downs provided the perfect backdrop for an evening of artistic celebration, marking the second year the event was hosted at the venue. Artwork on display included painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, digital art, printmaking, and crafts. A special thanks to our district-wide fine arts leaders for organizing this meaningful opportunity.

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North Side wins 5th Commissioners' Cup

The Madison County Commissioners' Cup has become a proud local tradition, and 2025 marks its eighth season. Once again, **North Side High stands tall, claiming its fifth Commissioners' Cup title** while also positioning for a state playoff run. Members of the Madison County Commission recognized Coach Woodrow Lowe and his team during the October meeting.

It was a special moment for Commission Chairman Mike Taylor, a 1984 North Side graduate, who shared memories from his own playing days with the team.

North Side Girls win Region Flag Football Title

North Side rolled through the Region 7 Tournament to earn a spot in the Girls Flag Football State Tournament. Special thanks to the Greater Jackson Chamber for sponsoring the newest rivalry trophy and elevating this growing sport.

Madison wins Superintendent's Cup at JMAC Awards

For the second time in three years, Madison claimed the Superintendent's Cup, awarded to the school with the most comprehensive athletic success across programs. From May 2025 through April 2026, the **Mustangs qualified for state competition in five events:** girls golf, cross country, boys soccer, and both boys and girls track and field.

Employees Enjoy Inaugural JMCSS EduFest



Teachers and staff members opened the school year with a bit of a twist: EduFEST! This festival-style gathering included teacher-led entertainment and games on the outside, with a 3-on-3 coed faculty basketball tournament held inside the gym at Liberty Technology High School. More than 18-hundred employees attended the event. And judging from the comments on the district's Facebook page – a great time was had by all! Check out the video.

WeCARE Color Walk A Huge Success



Hundreds of JMCSS employees gathered at Liberty Technology High School for the first ever WeCARE Color Walk, celebrating the district's wellness initiative launched in 2023. The come and go event featured bright color powder, music, and participants of all ages walking or running at their own pace. WeCARE continues to support the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of staff through workshops, activities, and wellness breaks.

City of Jackson Christmas Parade Takeover



Our students and schools joined the City of Jackson in celebrating the Jackson Christmas Parade, honoring Grand Marshal Dr. Marlon King. Board members were there in style, and parade-goers enjoyed the festive sights and sounds – made even brighter thanks to the incredible involvement of our schools.



Arts Supported Radiothon Raises \$28K



Fine Arts departments from several JMCSS high schools and middle schools joined Talk N West TN 101.5 FM for a radiothon that raised more than \$28,000 and collected over 50 bags of essential items to support homeless children in our community. Pastor Garry Martin spearheaded the effort, bringing schools and neighbors together for a powerful cause. We're grateful for every person who gave, shared, or showed up. This is the power of community.

Teacher of the Year Announced



Chanda Brafa of Jackson Academic STEAM Academy was named the 2026 JMCSS Teacher of the Year. A middle school science teacher, Brafa is in her fourth year in public education, and brings more than two decades of experience from a music-based instructional setting, reflecting the varied backgrounds that strengthen classrooms across the district. More than two dozen educators were recognized during this year's ceremony.

Gatsby-themed JMCSS Gala Best Yet



JMCSS celebrated excellence, partnership, and community impact at the 5th Annual JMCSS Gala, held May 1st at the Oman Arena. The event was made possible through the generous support of local businesses and industry partners, including 30 sponsors who purchased tables to ensure the Gala's success. Leaders Credit Union served as the presenting sponsor and continued its strong investment in public education. Established in 2022, the JMCSS Gala raises funds for the district's Special Projects Fund, which supports student and teacher centered initiatives across the district. [Click here for photos.](#)

Dr. Marlon King named Southwest Region Superintendent of Year



For the **second time in three years**, the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents (TOSS) recognized our Superintendent, Dr. Marlon King, as **Superintendent of the Year** for the Southwest Region. Dr. King is now under consideration for the 2026 Tennessee Superintendent of the Year, which will be announced at the annual TOSS Banquet in September. **Fun Fact:** Superintendent King holds the title of Region Superintendent of the Year while the Board hold the title of TSBA School Board of the Year!

King family continues to give back to JMCSS



In keeping with his focus on the betterment of JMCSS students, Dr. King, along with his wife Latisha, announced in 2021 an endowment for our public schools that supports Science, Education, the Arts, or Legal. Dr. King continued in 2025 to donate his bonus to support the endowment and scholarship. "The field of education has been a blessing to my family. We're both grounded in faith. We want to bless the children in our JMCSS community. This endowment allows us to leave a legacy in the process," Dr. King said.

Superintendent's son interns with JMCSS Communications



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Hudson King
JCM ECH graduate
and LOOP participant

JMCSS Board named TSBA School Board of the Year

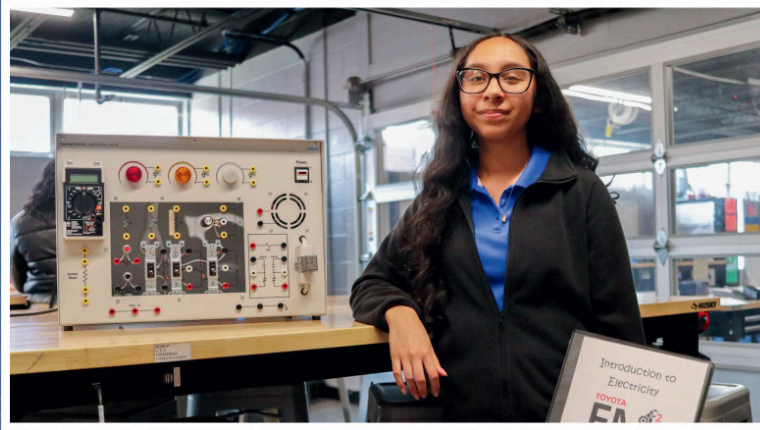


The Jackson-Madison County School System was selected as the School Board of the Year on Saturday, November 15, 2025 during the Tennessee School Boards Association (TSBA) Conference and Annual Convention in Nashville. This marks the second time in three years that TSBA has recognized JMCSS with its highest board honor—an achievement underscoring distinguished governance across Tennessee’s 147 public school districts. The JMCSS School Board includes Chairman Harvey Walden, Vice Chairman Jason Compton, Parliamentarian Andre Darnell, Legislative Liaison Glen Gaugh, Chairman Pro Tem Shane Barnes, TLN Representative Andrea Michelle Givens-Moore, Debbie Gaugh, James Johnson, and Marcia Moss. While these locally elected leaders bring diverse perspectives and do not always vote in unison, they remain united in their commitment to keeping students at the center of their decision-making. Their collective service reflects a steady and collaborative approach to governance that has strengthened the district’s trajectory during a period of transformational growth.



REDEFINING MOMENTUM IN EDUCATION

Preparing the next generation



Jackson-Madison County Schools is building momentum through advanced career pathways at *Malesus STEM Innovation Center*, and technology-centered extracurriculars like *Greenpower and robotics*.



Feel the momentum!
Scan now or visit jmcss.org



Important links for 2026-2027



School Calendar

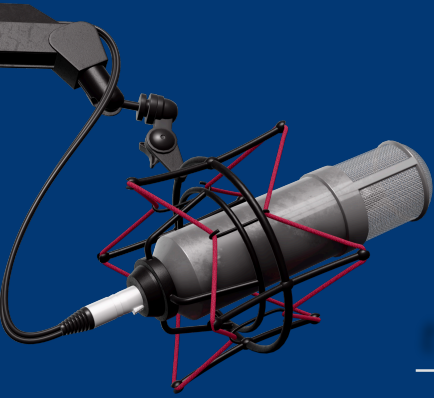


- Facebook
- Twitter
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Let's Talk

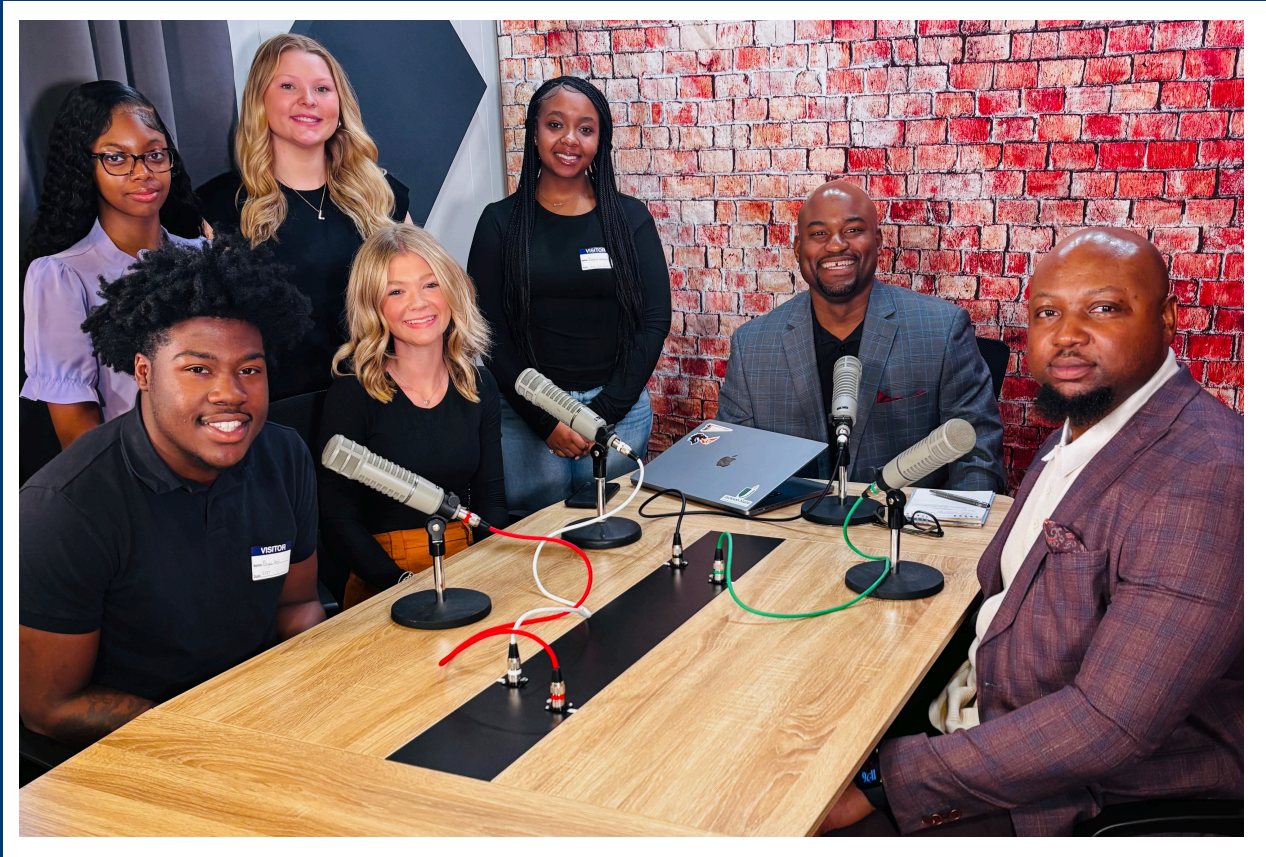
Let's Talk/Onflo helps us strengthen communication and build trust with parents, staff, students, and our community. It's a simple way to connect with us anytime, from anywhere. Ask a question, share feedback, or celebrate a success.





For the District

the podcast for Jackson-Madison County Schools



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