

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Nashville Public Education Foundation Releases Documentary to Spark Community Engagement and Influence Future Policies Supportive of ALL Children and Youth

*By Design: The Shaping of Nashville's Public Schools explores effects of decades-old decisions still impacting city's students today*

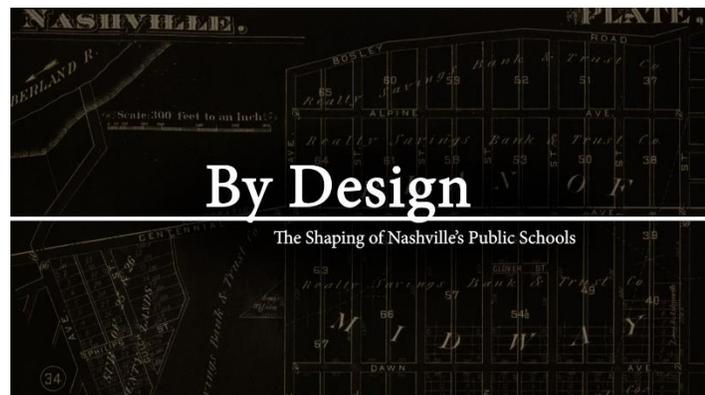
*Foundation provides 5-step overview for communities across America to research and document their own public education history*

**NASHVILLE, TENN. – Nov. 2, 2021** – Following a private premiere of *By Design: The Shaping of Nashville's Public Schools* and a summer of community screenings and discussion panels, the [Nashville Public Education Foundation \(NPEF\)](#) has released the film for all to watch [on YouTube](#). The documentary is intended to educate Nashville's community members and policymakers about the city's history of inequity in public education to stimulate conversations about collective solutions for a public school system that works for ALL students.

In survey data from community pre-release screenings of the documentary, nearly all respondents (+95%) said the film was not only a fair representation of Nashville's history, but that it taught them something new and inspired them to have related conversations with family and friends.

"To create a public education system where ALL children can thrive, we need to recognize the ways in which we have failed to do that in our past," said **Katie Cour, President and CEO of the Nashville Public Education Foundation**. "It's critically important that our city's community understands and discusses these mistakes so we can work on policies and solutions to make sure every student in Nashville is supported."

The 60-minute documentary examines defining moments in the history of public schooling in Nashville dating back to the 1800s and the effects of community priorities and city policies on education. The video features interviews with three historians: the Tennessee Historical Commission's Linda Wynn, Columbia University professor Dr. Ansley Erickson, and Nashville's unofficial historian David Ewing. The documentary also highlights first-hand witnesses of pivotal moments in history, including five of the original 16 Black students who integrated Nashville schools in 1957, former School Board and Metro Council Member Ed Kindall, Governor Phil Bredesen, Rev. Becca Stevens, Metro Nashville Public Schools graduate and community advocate Kasar Abdulla, and others.



-more-



The documentary was produced by NPEF in collaboration with video production company Moving Picture Boys, education experts, leading historians, community and state leaders, and students from defining moments in the city’s public school history.

NPEF has created several resources that complement the documentary. The *By Design* [Watch Guide](#) provides discussion questions for groups wanting to have solutions-driven conversations after watching the film. The [Action Guide](#) provides next steps for individuals wanting to continue to learn about issues facing schools and ways to get active in their

communities. For communities interested in exploring the impact of their own educational history, NPEF has created [a resource outlining helpful strategies](#) to utilize in the completion of similar projects. NPEF will continue to host viewings of *By Design: The Shaping of Nashville’s Public Schools* and assemble panels for community groups seeking to engage with the film. Interested stakeholders can sign-up to receive email alerts and updates from the foundation online at [www.nashvillepef.org](http://www.nashvillepef.org).

###

#### **About the Nashville Public Education Foundation**

The Nashville Public Education Foundation is a nonprofit organization that works to remove barriers for students by promoting excellence, serving as a critical friend to Metro Nashville Public Schools, convening stakeholders, and advocating for change so all students can thrive in school. More information is available at [nashvillepef.org](http://nashvillepef.org).

**Media Contact:** Paul Oakley / [poakley@tinymightyco.com](mailto:poakley@tinymightyco.com)