



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

Vasco A. Smith, Jr., Administration Building
11th Floor, 160 North Main, Memphis, Tennessee 38103

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 15, 2021

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**SHELBY COUNTY GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL NONPROFITS WANT
COMMUNITY INPUT TO CREATE A-Z ALPHABET BOOK HIGHLIGHTING ALL
THINGS SHELBY COUNTY**

***Shelby County Government has partnered with more than 60 nonprofit organizations to
produce an alphabet book that represents our community from A-to-Z.***

Shelby County, TN – Shelby County Government and its partner nonprofit organizations want community help to create an alphabet book that highlights the beauty of our community and encourages literacy for our youngest readers. The “A-to-Z Shelby County Book” will be filled with words submitted by children, families, and educators. It is the first initiative of the Children, Youth, and Education Subcommittee of the Shelby County Nonprofit Committee. The book is intended for children in kindergarten through third grade.

In the book, each letter of the alphabet will correspond with a word that best describes the people, places, and things that make our county special. The words will come from community members of all ages who complete [this short survey at www.bit.ly/AZShelbyCountyBook](http://www.bit.ly/AZShelbyCountyBook). Respondents are asked to name a person, place, or thing in Shelby County based the letters they are given. The survey will remain open until November 19, 2021.

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The submitted words will be reviewed by literacy experts and subcommittee members, who will select the words that will be included in the book. Students and teachers from local schools will be chosen to create the artwork to correspond with each letter.

Mayor Lee Harris: “I can’t think of a better project to encourage both reading and pride in Shelby County than the ‘A-Z Shelby County Book.’ We know that the ability to read at grade-level is a significant indicator of future success both in school and in life. I’m proud to see what can be accomplished when Shelby County government and our local nonprofit organizations join forces.”

Dr. Cedrick Gray, Shelby County Director of Education, subcommittee co-chair: “We must do everything we can to move the needle and improve literacy for Shelby County’s youngest readers. The ‘A-Z Shelby County Book’ will be a fun exercise that helps parents and educators achieve that goal.”

Cardell Orrin, Memphis executive director Stand for Children, subcommittee co-chair: “Stand for Children partners with parents and advocates for children. One of our key missions is to see children hit their grade-level reading milestones. Choosing the words for the ‘A-Z Shelby County Book’ is a creative way to do that.”

About the Shelby County Nonprofit Committee:

The Shelby County Nonprofit Committee is an effort between Shelby County Government and nearly 200 nonprofit organizations. The initiative helps nonprofit organizations better coordinate, connect, and communicate between themselves and with Shelby County Government.

(End of Release)