

**OFFICE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**  
**Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items**  
**March 19–20, 2015**

**OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

11. Approval to contract with Connections Education, LLC for the operation of the Mississippi Virtual School system

Awarded Vendor:       Connections Education, LLC  
                                  Columbia, MD

Scope of Project:   The contractor is responsible for the total operation, administration, and management of the virtual school including registration, enrollment, course content, and instructional staff.

Renewal of contract for years two through five will be determined annually and shall be contingent upon the successful completion of the preceding year's contract and the availability of funds. Personnel associated with this contract are not former Department employees or related to any Department employees.

Scope of Contract:

- Term of Contract:                               July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016
- Total Amount to be Awarded:               \$500,000
- Method of Award:                               Request for Proposals

Funding Source:   State funds

Summary of Selection Process:

A competitive selection process was utilized to award this contract.

Scoring Criteria:

- A. Vendor Profile
- B. Production Proposal
- C. Budget

Recommendation:   Approval

Back-up material attached

## **Mississippi Virtual Public School (MVPS) Process**

**I. Purpose** - Provide a broader range of educational options to parents and other public school choices for students with instruction via the Internet in a virtual or remote setting.

**II. Responsibility of the Mississippi Department of Education** – Be responsible for the MVPS program; select private provider through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process to administer, manage, and operate the MVPS program; and approve all coursework and policy of the MVPS.

**III. Statute** - Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated Chapter 161 Section 37-161-3.

### **IV. MVPS Process: Mississippi Department of Education Responsibilities**

1. Develop and advertise RFP based upon courses in curriculum frameworks.
2. Establish rating committee, conduct orientation, and coordinate the review process.
3. Present recommendations of the Rating Committee Members to State Board of Education.
4. Present contract to the Personal Services Contract Review Board (PSCRB) for approval.
5. Execute contract and monitor the process.
6. Answer questions from educators, parents, students, and other stakeholders about course offerings and policy for the MVPS.
7. Provide school districts with a list of course codes for the MVPS.

### **V. MVPS Process: School District Responsibilities**

1. Designate a Site Coordinator to complete online training, oversee student enrollment and withdrawals, monitor Mentor progress, approve course selections, inform parents that student is taking a MVPS course, monitor receipt of students' final transcripts, and communicate with MVPS Program Manager.
2. Designate Mentors to complete online training, discuss guidelines with students, communicate with MVPS teacher, monitor the progress of students, and proctor semester and final exams.
3. Uphold school district policies regarding credit issuance, calculation and weighting of grades into the student grade point average and class rank.
4. Allocate space, time, and technology for student to complete coursework as needed.
5. Ensure that students have all required supplemental resources and supplies.

**NOTE:** The Mississippi Virtual Public School is the only online course system that has been approved for students to earn Carnegie Unit Credit without the school having to provide the certified teacher. In the case of a credit recovery program, LEAs determine the instructional methodology that will be used which may include the MVPS, an online program through a different vendor, computer assisted instruction, or direct instruction as long as the content is based on the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks and Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards.

**Office of Professional Development  
Mississippi Virtual Public School (MVPS)**

**Background Information 2010-2015**

- In 2010 legislation was revised to allow the MVPS to be operated by private providers, selected by a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process and approved by the State Board of Education.
- The MVPS is currently the only online environment available to Mississippi Students to earn credit towards a Mississippi Public High School Diploma.

**Funding for the MVPS**

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Allocated	\$600,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Expended	\$589,270	\$500,000	\$490,655	\$500,000	Incomplete

**Enrollment and Pass Rate**

	2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015
	Enroll- ment	Pass Rate	Enroll- ment	Pass Rate	Enroll- ment	Pass Rate	Enroll- ment	Pass Rate	Enrollment
State Funded	3106	93%	3382	92%	3121	90%	3499	85%	3233
District Funded	93	95%	8	100%	134	93%	2	100%	NA
Private Funded	31	93%	41	90%	18	67%	0	NA	NA

**Budget 2015 – 2016**

The proposed cost per ½ credit course is \$265 and the proposed cost for a 1 credit course is \$530.

Mississippi Virtual Public School  
Course Listing

**Full Credit Courses (full year or block A/B sections)**

**English Language Arts**

CCSS English II  
CCSS English III  
CCSS English IV  
AP English Language and  
Composition  
AP English Literature and  
Composition  
Foundations of Journalism

**Mathematics**

CCSS Algebra I  
CCSS Algebra II  
CCSS Geometry  
AP Calculus AB  
AP Calculus BC  
AP Statistics  
Algebra III  
Calculus

**Computer Science**

AP Computer Science

**Health and Physical Education**

Contemporary Health

**Social Studies**

World History  
U.S. History from Post-reconstruction to  
present  
AP U.S. History  
Psychology  
AP Human Geography

**Science**

Chemistry  
Physics  
AP Physics  
Biology I  
AP Biology  
Earth and Space Science  
Physical Science

**Foreign Language**

French I, II, III, IV  
German I, II, III  
Spanish I, II, III, IV  
AP Spanish Language  
Latin I, II, III

**Half Credit Courses (These AP courses will not be offered in a block or .5 credit section)**

**Science**

Environmental Science

**Social Studies**

Introduction to World Geography  
American Government (U.S.  
Government)  
Economics  
AP Government and Politics-United  
States  
AP Psychology  
AP Macroeconomics  
AP Microeconomics



**Business Technology**

Personal Finance  
Technology Foundations

**Health and Physical Education**


Physical Education  
Contemporary Health A



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**Miss. Code Ann. § 37-161-3** (Copy w/ Cite)

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*Miss. Code Ann. § 37-161-3*

#### MISSISSIPPI CODE of 1972

\*\*\* Current through the 2013 Regular Session and 1st and 2nd Extraordinary Sessions \*\*\*

#### TITLE 37. EDUCATION

#### CHAPTER 161. MISSISSIPPI EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 2006

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-161-3 (2013)

§ 37-161-3. Legislative findings and declarations; Mississippi Virtual Public School Program created; definitions; necessary instructional materials and access to necessary technology provided to students enrolled in virtual school; qualifications of teachers; enrollment to be free of charge to students

(1) The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(a) Meeting the educational needs of children in our state's schools is of the greatest importance to the future welfare of the State of Mississippi;

(b) Closing the achievement gap between high-performing students, including the achievement gap among at-risk students, is a significant and present challenge;

(c) Providing a broader range of educational options to parents and utilizing existing resources, along with technology, may help students in the state improve their academic achievement; and

(d) Many of the state's school districts currently lack the capacity to provide other public school choices for students whose schools are low performing.

(2) There is created the Mississippi Virtual Public School Program, which is the responsibility of the State Department of Education. It is the intent of the Legislature that the Mississippi Virtual Public School established under this section provides Mississippi families with an alternative choice to access additional educational resources in an effort to improve academic achievement. The Mississippi Virtual Public School must be recognized as a public school and provide equitable treatment and resources as are other public schools in the state. Private providers, overseen by the State Department of Education, may be selected by the State Board of Education to administer, manage or operate virtual school programs in this state, including the total operation of the Mississippi Virtual Public School Program. Any private provider chosen to provide services under the provisions of this subsection shall be chosen through a competitive RFP process.

(3) Nothing in this section may be interpreted as precluding the use of computer- and Internet-based instruction for students in a virtual or remote setting utilizing the Mississippi Virtual Public School.

(4) As used in this section, the following words and phrases have the meanings respectively ascribed unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

(a) "Mississippi Virtual Public School" means a public school in which the state uses technology in order to deliver instruction to students via the Internet in a virtual or remote setting.

(b) "Sponsor" means the public school district is responsible for the academic process for each student including, but not limited to, enrollment, awarding of credit and monitoring progress.

(5) (a) The State Board of Education shall establish the Mississippi Virtual Public School beginning in school year 2006-2007.

(b) Students who enroll in the Mississippi Virtual Public School may reside anywhere in the State of Mississippi.

(6) Subject to appropriation, the Mississippi Virtual Public School shall provide to each student enrolled in the school all necessary instructional materials. Subject to appropriation, the sponsored school must ensure that each student is provided access to the necessary technology, such as a computer and printer, and to an Internet connection for school work purposes.


(7) The State Board of Education shall have approval authority for all coursework and policy of the Mississippi Virtual Public School.

(8) Each teacher employed by or participating in the delivery of instruction through the Mississippi Virtual Public School must meet all qualifications for licensure in the State of Mississippi.

(9) Any student who meets state residency requirements may enroll in the Mississippi Virtual Public School.

(10) Enrollment in the Mississippi Virtual Public School must be free of charge to students. The costs associated with the operations of the virtual school must be shared by the State Department of Education, subject to appropriation, and/or the local school districts.

**HISTORY:** SOURCES: Laws, 2006, ch. 346, § 1; Laws, 2006, ch. 504, § 10; reenacted without change, Laws, 2009, ch. 345, § 32; Laws, 2010, ch. 330, § 1; Laws, 2011, ch. 442, § 19, eff from and after July 1, 2011.

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