

**OFFICE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**  
**Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items**  
**June 11, 2020**

**OFFICE OF ACADEMIC EDUCATION**

03. Information: Update on Middle Grades Pilot Initiative [Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

This report will provide an update of the Middle Grades Pilot Initiative for the 2019-2020 school year for twenty (20) pilot schools in the state of Mississippi.

This item references Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 of the *Mississippi Board of Education 2018-2022 Strategic Plan*.

Information Only

Back-up material attached

# Update: Middle Grades Initiative

State Board of Education

June 11, 2020



**Dr. Marla Davis**

Bureau Director  
Office of Secondary Education

**Richard Morrison**

Leadership Coach for School Improvement  
Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

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## Mississippi Department of Education

### VISION

To create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens

### MISSION

To provide leadership through the development of policy and accountability systems so that all students are prepared to compete in the global community




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## Purpose of the Initiative

- To focus on leveraging early learning gains to create a steady continuum of growth through the middle grades and to ensure **equitable access** to advanced courses in high school
- To ensure equitable access to **rigorous math** courses for all students, particularly African American males and students with IEPs, in the middle grades
- To help teachers and leaders develop the skills that support middle school students' **social, emotional, and academic development**



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## Strategic Partners

**SREB**

Southern Regional  
Education Board



**MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™**  
RESEARCH & CURRICULUM UNIT



 **CollegeBoard**



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## Middle School Pilot Initiative 2020



Graphic by 114° Graphics  
<http://www.114graphics.com>

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## Middle School Pilot Initiative 2020

Armstrong Middle School (TSI)	Belle/Shivers Middle School	Cleveland Central Middle School	Colmer Middle School (TSI)
Columbus Middle School (ATSI)	Magnolia Middle School (Moss Point) (ATSI)	Jefferson County Upper Elementary School (CSI)	Jefferson County Junior High School (CSI)
Jefferson Middle School (TSI)	Laurel Middle School (TSI)	Magnolia Middle School (Meridian)	Rod Paige Middle School (TSI)
Simmons Junior High School	Siwell Middle School (TSI)	Vicksburg Junior High School (ATSI)	W.A. Higgins Middle School
Warren Central Junior High School (ATSI)	William Winans Middle School (TSI)	Williams-Sullivan Middle School (TSI)	Yazoo County Middle School (TSI)



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## Assurances & Commitments

- Pilot sites shall share academic, behavioral, and testing data with the MDE for purposes of evaluating effectiveness of the professional learning. Additionally, teachers and leaders of participating schools and districts shall provide information about the Middle School Initiative Pilot to the MDE upon request.
- MSIS data shall be used to verify trend data changes.



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## Pilot Site Virtual Meeting – August 2019

- Included school teams from pilot sites (Principal, Assistant Principal, Project Lead, Lead Teacher, and/or Guidance Counselor)
- Identified our strategic partners, their scope of support, and tentative dates for deployment
- Reframed the purpose of the Middle School Pilot Initiative



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## Schools Working Together in Small Teams

### Why Did We Choose the Small Teams Approach?

- Schools take ownership for problems and solutions
- Supports include specific expertise, guidance and tools to help schools succeed
- School leaders learn with / from others and guide the change process
- Teachers play an active role in solving shared problems of practice
- Approach ensures sustainability and builds site-specific capacity



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## MS Association of Middle Level Education (MAMLE) – October 2019



SREB

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## MAMLE Presenters and Keynote Speakers



Dr. Tim Jacobus,  
REL-SE

Theme:  
"The Administrator's Role  
in Supporting Math  
Instruction"



Hannah Gadd Ardrey,  
MS 2019 Teacher  
of the Year

Theme:  
"Reaching All Learners  
through M.U.S.I.C."



Dr. Sabina Palmer,  
Executive Director, MASD

Theme:  
"Middle School is a HEART  
Work"

Levonna Roth,  
Founder, Ignite Your  
S.H.I.N.E. Framework

Theme:  
"Social-Emotional Learning &  
Educating the Whole Child"



## MAMLE Breakout Sessions

- Literacy
- Science
- CTE & the ISP
- Grant Writing
- Educator Self-Care
- Family Engagement
- Behavior Management
- Trauma & School Safety
- Social Emotional Learning
- English Language Learners
- Educating Children of Poverty
- Cross-Curricular Best Practices
- Teaching with Primary Sources
- MS Alternative Academic Achievement Standards
- The Principal's Role in Supporting Math Instruction
- The Principal's Role on School Culture & Teacher Satisfaction
- Closing the Achievement Gap between General Education and Special Education Students



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**SREB**

Southern Regional  
Education Board



Unique three-year partnership to build the capacity of networked communities of middle school leaders and teachers to identify and solve problems of practice using SREB's research-based continuous improvement



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## School Teams & Problem of Practice Supports

### SREB Lead Coaches



Toketha Ferguson & Allyson Morgan



Bob Stokes



Richard Morrison



1. Colmer Middle School
2. Magnolia Middle School (Moss Point)
3. Magnolia Middle School (Meridian)
4. Yazoo County Middle School
5. Siwell Middle School
6. Belle/Shivers Middle School
7. W.A. Higgins Middle School

1. Rod Paige Middle School
2. Jefferson Middle School
3. Williams-Sullivan Middle School
4. Jefferson County Upper Elementary School
5. Jefferson County Junior High School
6. Armstrong Middle School
7. Laurel Middle School

1. Warren Central Junior High School
2. Vicksburg Junior High School
3. Simmons Junior High School
4. Cleveland Central Middle School
5. William Winans Middle School
6. Columbus Middle School

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## SREB Supports November – December 2019

- Focus on instructional core
- Direct classroom and on-site observations
- Actionable technical assistance and plans of action
- High leverage practices for improving student achievement



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## SREB Supports January 2020 – present

- Analyze root causes to gain greater insights into areas of growth and challenges
- Review Network AIM
- Prioritize the obstacles that impeded student achievement
- Strengthen connection between their Problems-of-Practice (POPs) and School Improvement Plans



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## School Spotlights



Magnolia Middle School (Meridian) used Powerful Literacy Practices through their PLCs to increase 6<sup>th</sup> grade ELA comprehension & instructional practices.



Rod Paige Middle School developed focus teams on each aspect of their root cause analysis around using engaging assignments to develop student and community engagement.



Gulf Coast schools formed a mini-network to align their POPs and learn from each other.

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## SREB Supports January 2020 - present

- Added two (2) project managers to support the state's project
- Provided thirty (30) on-site coaching days to administrators, teachers, and school teams
- Continuous virtual supports to all schools



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## SREB Supports January 2020 - present

### COVID-19 Supports

- Supported pilot site administrators and teachers to implement remote learning opportunities where students can communicate, work on assignments and get informative feedback from their teachers, just as they do in a face-to-face classroom
- Hosted a virtual convening in April to help transition in-person teacher team collaboration to remote collaboration opportunities



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# SREB Supports January 2020 - present

## COVID-19 Supports

### Three Components of Virtual Technical Assistance:

1. Identified how school leaders will support teachers in identifying essential standards to teach remotely
2. Supported school leaders in providing teachers with engaging remote instruction
3. Focused on how to use the issues faced during this time to bolster students' ability to adapt and be ready for next year and the future



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## Logic Model to Evaluate Implementation & Supports

Inputs (Resources)	Activities	Outputs (Products)	Short-Term Outcomes (1 year)	Mid-Term Outcomes (2 years)	Long-Term Outcomes (3 years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SREB Instructional Coaches</li> <li>Mississippi Department of Education</li> <li>MMGW materials, Six-Step Process materials and PDSA materials, Root Cause Analysis process</li> <li>A New Mission for the Middle Grades, SREB Commission Report</li> <li>Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the MMGW Framework sessions</li> <li>Regular Network meetings with middle grade educators comprised of creating school problem statements, deciding on focus areas, developing a root cause analysis and reaching school solutions</li> <li>SREB coaching visits in the middle schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School problem statements, focus areas and root cause analyses</li> <li>Coaching notes</li> <li>Participant survey results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full participation in professional learning by the 20 MS middle school teams</li> <li>Higher Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey results</li> <li>Increased teacher attendance</li> <li>More schools scoring C or higher on the state report card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher number of students measuring proficient in reading and math on MS MAAP state tests.</li> <li>Lower out-of-school suspensions</li> <li>Lower absentee rates</li> <li>Higher Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey results</li> <li>Increased teacher attendance</li> <li>More schools scoring C or higher on the state report card</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher number of students measuring proficient in reading and math on MS MAAP state tests.</li> <li>Lower out-of-school suspensions</li> <li>Lower absentee rates</li> <li>Higher Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey results</li> <li>Increased teacher attendance</li> <li>More schools scoring C or higher on the state report card</li> </ul>

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