**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Speech-Language Therapy Program/ Scholarship (Nate Rogers)**

GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Requirements for ALL Public Schools:

1. Adopt a policy to ensure that students will be screened for articulation, language, voice, and fluency disorders before the end of Grade 1.
2. If a student fails the screener, the parent or legal guardian will be notified of the results of the screener.
3. If a student fails the screener, the school district, in its discretion, may perform a comprehensive speech-language evaluation.
4. If the parent or legal guardian of a student who fails the speech-language screener exercises the option to have a subsequent evaluation performed, which must be administered by a speech-language pathologist, the school district shall consider the evaluation for eligibility in the area of speech-language in accordance with the procedures mandated by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for a placement in a speech-language program within the current school or to receive a Mississippi speech-language therapy scholarship for placement in a speech-language program in a nonpublic special purpose school.
5. If a student from your school district elects to participate in the Speech-Language Scholarship Program, the district must verify the enrollment dates of the student to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education.
6. Parents must be given the opportunity to opt out of the screening process.

**NOTE: If a student from your school district is awarded a Speech-Language Therapy Scholarship, Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) funds will follow the student.**

Questions related to the application process and IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) should be directed to Teresa Laney, Office of Special Education, at tlaney@mdek12.org or 601-359-3498.