MISSISSIPPI SUCCEEDS
Rising to the Challenge
Strategic Plan
Annual Progress Report

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

January 21, 2021
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
State Board of Education  

**STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

1. **ALL** Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
2. **EVERY** Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career
3. **EVERY** Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program
4. **EVERY** School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
5. **EVERY** Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes
6. **EVERY** School and District is Rated “C” or Higher
Where We Started

Pre-Pandemic Achievements
Mississippi National Rankings
NAEP Gains
National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
Mississippi Students Scoring Proficient or Above

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 4 Reading</th>
<th>Grade 4 Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009: 22%</td>
<td>2019: 32%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 8 Reading</th>
<th>Grade 8 Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009: 19%</td>
<td>2019: 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009: 15%</td>
<td>2019: 24%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>English Language Arts (ELA) Levels 4 &amp; 5</th>
<th>Mathematics Levels 4 &amp; 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>33.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
3rd Grade Reading Achievement

- **2015**: 85%
- **2018**: 93%
- **2019**: 86%*
Class of 2019 Increases Advanced Placement (AP) Participation and Performance

All Students
- Total Mississippi students taking AP courses and passing AP exams have both nearly doubled since 2013.
- AP exam pass rate for students in all grades in 2018-19 was 34%.

Class of 2019
- 23% of Mississippi’s public-school class of 2019 took 13,178 AP exams during high school, an increase (+0.4%) from the class of 2018.
- 32.5% earned qualifying scores, an increase from the previous year’s graduates.
MISSISSIPPI’S GRADUATION RATE

- National Average (most recent data available)
- Mississippi (accountability year data)
### QUALITY COUNTS MOST IMPROVED

**No. 2 in the Nation for Improvement in Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>SCORE / GRADE</th>
<th>CHANGE 2008-2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>85.7 B</td>
<td>9.3 ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>73.9 C</td>
<td>6.2 ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>75.6 C</td>
<td>3.7 ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>71.4 C-</td>
<td>3.5 ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>81.9 B-</td>
<td>2.9 ↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EdWeek Research Center, 2020  
Category: Chance for Success
Where We Acted

Key Actions to Manage Impact of Pandemic
Child Nutrition

9.5 million meals
served to children in the spring and summer

- Expedited process to convert federal school lunch programs to more flexible summer food program, enabling districts to serve more than 9.5 million meals to children in the spring and summer.

- Every school district continues to participate in the food program, which provides more than 7.5 million meals per month to Mississippi students.
Health and Safety

• Collaborated with state health officer to provide life-saving information to school and district leaders that protected the health of their students, staff and families.

• Partnered with Mississippi Department of Mental Health to develop resources for academic counselors to support the social-emotional and mental health of students.

• Worked with Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), Mississippi National Guard and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to distribute 1.2 million cloth masks and 40,176 gallons of hand sanitizer to school districts.
Information and Guidance

• Created online information hub for districts and families to get up-to-date information about how the pandemic was affecting all aspects of public education.

• Developed guidance for school districts on a broad range of issues to help manage school building closures:
  o Implementing distance learning
  o Serving students with disabilities
  o Ensuring the health and safety of staff and students
  o Renewing educator licenses
  o Paying staff
  o Helping students complete dual credit and Advanced Placement courses and exams online
Information and Guidance

• Delivered numerous webinars for school and district leaders to understand policy actions including:
  o Waiver of 180-day school year requirement
  o Suspension of federal and state assessments
  o Promotion of 3rd graders without a reading test
  o Credit completion for graduating seniors
  o Admission to educator preparation programs without standardized testing requirement
  o Completion of student-teaching requirements during school closures
• Published learning-at-home resources for students in pre-K through grade 12, including resources for students with visual or hearing impairments, to support learning during extended school closures.

• Surveyed academic counselors to develop technical assistance related to school closures.

• Conducted additional Mississippi Online Course Approval (MOCA) process, resulting in approval of 71 additional courses.
SCHOOL REOPENING PLANS
Partnered with a task force of superintendents from a diverse range of districts to help all districts address key issues to reopen schools. MDE and partners published guidance and is supporting continued professional development in key areas.
New School Year Attendance and Enrollment

• Established Mississippi State Board of Education (SBE) Policy Chapter 9, Rule 9.2: *Reporting Attendance for Virtual Learning*, to allow districts to take attendance in three modes for the 2020-21 school year: traditional, virtual or a hybrid of in-person and distance learning.

• Responded to enrollment drop of nearly 23,000 students by deploying School Attendance Officers (SAOs) to work with districts to ensure all compulsory school-age children whose families had not re-enrolled them in public schools in 2020-21 were registered in a learning environment. An analysis of public-school enrollment showed a drop in kindergarteners and spike in homeschoolers drove the statewide enrollment decline in the 2020-21 school year.
Internal Operations

• Replaced 174 mobile computer devices with encrypted hard drives for MDE staff.

• Shifted to cloud-based device management.

• Migrated files to cloud storage to support telework needs.

• Established Windows virtual machine, which is a computer resource that uses software instead of a physical computer to run programs and deploy apps.

• Secured computer-based call center software, trained staff and implemented remote customer service call center to enable stakeholders to reach licensure office and other MDE staff during COVID-19 building closures.
NEW RESOURCES
New Resource in Response to COVID-19

MPB Education Channel
Certified teachers and Mississippi Department of Education content staff teach 25-minute lessons aligned to Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards. Lessons support students, teachers and parents during the pandemic and include math, science, English Language Arts, early childhood, art and physical education.

Watch weekdays starting at 7 a.m.
New Resources in Response to COVID-19

Pre-K through Grade 12 Arts Education Guidance
Practical guidance supports pre-K-12 administrators and arts educators as they provide arts instruction for students during the pandemic.

Digital Learning District Guidance
Guidance helps districts adapt to digital and distance learning challenges and prepare for the 2020-21 school year.

Instructional Planning Guides for Grades K-12 in Mathematics, ELA, and Science
Guides support teachers with sequencing of content standards across the grade and with locating aligned resources.
Mississippi Connects Professional Development and Resources Hub

Research-based resources and learning opportunities are available for educators that support online, blended and hybrid models of instruction and learning.
High-Quality Instructional Materials Website
MDE partnered with Mississippi First to launch a new website for Mississippi teachers to increase their access to high-quality instructional materials. The site, msinstructionalmaterials.org, provides a central location for math and social studies teachers to review high-quality, standards-aligned materials that have been evaluated and adopted by other Mississippi teachers and school districts. English Language Arts (ELA) materials will be added to the site in 2021.
Strong Readers Strong Leaders Mississippi

The revamped strongreadersms.com website helps families assist children with building their reading skills. The site provides activities, resources and information for children from birth through grade 5 to help become strong readers.
New Educator Resources

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Standards
New social and emotional learning standards were created in collaboration with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Professional learning is available to help implement standards.

Equipped Booklist
Supports educators in making instructional decisions around the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards while promoting literacy that acknowledges a variety of text types.
Mississippi Connects Actions

• Advocated to the Mississippi Legislature for funds to equip every public-school student in Mississippi with the technology to learn at school and at home.

• Secured $200 million from the Legislature through two laws, the [Equity in Distance Learning Act (SB 3044)](Equity in Distance Learning Act (SB 3044)) and the [Mississippi Pandemic Response Broadband Availability Act (HB 1788)](Mississippi Pandemic Response Broadband Availability Act (HB 1788)).

• Collaborated with Governor, Lt. Governor, House Speaker and State Auditor to ensure compliance with state and federal funding requirements and successful implementation of the laws.

• Established Mississippi Connects initiative, making Mississippi the only state in the nation with a comprehensive digital learning program providing computers and teaching and learning support to every public-school student in the state.
Mississippi Connects Components

**Devices and Services**
Laptops or tablets delivered to districts with all software, security and support features pre-loaded and configured for immediate use.

**Digital Curriculum and Learning Management Systems**
High-quality instructional materials and online platforms for teaching and learning.

**Connectivity**
Enhanced internet connectivity in areas of the state where students do not have broadband service.

**Professional Development**
Training and technology support for educators, students and parents to be successful with digital learning.

**Telehealth and Teletherapy**
Student access to telehealth and teletherapy services for their physical, social and emotional health.
### Mississippi Connects Status

#### Devices and Services
- Led competitive process to contract with vendors for devices and learning software.
- Worked with districts to review and approve their detailed digital learning plans to establish SB 3044 funding eligibility and guide their implementation of digital learning programs.

#### Digital Curriculum and Learning Management Systems
- Negotiated contracts for learning management system (LMS) software including Canvas, Schoology and Google’s G-Suite for Education for districts to purchase 214,656 LMS licenses for a total cost of $1,594,000.

#### Professional Development
- Delivered customized training to more than 2,000 educators through Mississippi Connects, including meeting with a consultant to understand the district’s specific goals and challenges, curating resources personalized for the district and providing individualized support.

#### Telehealth and Teletherpay
- Collaborated with Mississippi State Medical Association and other medical professionals to develop school-based pilot program set to launch in 2021.
Equity in Distance Learning Act (SB 3044)

- 148 of 150 districts purchased devices
- 390,000 devices purchased
  - 325,000 devices ordered through state bulk purchasing program
  - 65,000 devices ordered independently
- 98.6% of SB 3044 funds expended ($147,672,168 of $149.7 million appropriation)

All devices delivered before December 1.
All reimbursement requests fulfilled by the December 15 deadline.
Mississippi Pandemic Broadband Availability Act (HB 1788)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>144</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>78.9%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>of 150 public-school districts participated</td>
<td>of Choctaw Tribal schools participated</td>
<td>of 121 independent schools participated</td>
<td>of HB 1788 funds expended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main purchases included **hot spots and equipment** including access points, switches and fiber optic cable to strengthen and expand the footprint of a school campus' network infrastructure. A few districts used funds to build new cell towers.
Mississippi Connects Communication

- Testified before the Mississippi Legislature during 2020 session to make the case for Mississippi Connects.

- Created Mississippi Connects branding and webpages.

- Developed and distributed Mississippi Connects communication toolkit for educators to support families and students with digital learning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13</th>
<th>69</th>
<th>28</th>
<th>32</th>
<th>9</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News Releases and Editorials and Numerous Media Interviews</td>
<td>Social Media Posts Promoting Mississippi Connects and Announcing Milestones</td>
<td>Newsletter Announcements to Educators About Mississippi Connects Progress and Opportunities</td>
<td>Webinars for Districts and Independent and Tribal Schools Regarding Implementation of Mississippi Connects Legislation</td>
<td>State and National Mississippi Connects Presentations</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Media Coverage

- Secured **56 news stories** in every local and statewide Mississippi media market and numerous major national news outlets (The New York Times, Education Week, Politico, MSN and Associated Press).

- Broad and sustained media coverage raised awareness about Mississippi being a national leader in digital learning and bringing equity to education.
Legislature credited for funding Mississippi Connects.

Every child in the state being provided with a device.

Mississippi is receiving devices, despite national shortages.

122,000 Earned Social Media Views
Communication Impact

- Ensured **all school districts were informed** about the opportunity and how to participate.
- Showed districts, teachers, students and families Mississippi is addressing their current needs to be successful in digital learning.
- Built state and national partnerships to support and sustain Mississippi Connects, including:
  - $200,000 investment from philanthropic partners and a commitment to a long-term partnership with public schools
  - $500,000 in training contributed from Google, Apple and Microsoft for Mississippi educators through 2022
  - Invitations to future state and national conferences
GOAL 1

ALL Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas
Continued and extended K-3 professional development
system opportunities for Language Essentials for Teaching Reading and Spelling (LETRS) trainings to K-8 teachers, special education teachers, preservice teachers and Institutions of Higher Learning staff. \textit{(Goals 1, 4)}

Developed a virtual coaching model
to provide coaching supports and professional learning opportunities to K-4 teachers. \textit{(Goals 1, 3, 4)}

Conducted statewide virtual Family Literacy Nights
to provide families of K-3 grade students tips and activities to use at home to improve students' reading skills, and provided strategies to help manage stress, build positive relationships, and work with others. \textit{(Goal 1)}
GOAL 1: Key Actions

**Developed online courses**
in the areas of mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA) and science. *(Goals 2, 4)*

**Conducted virtual training**
for all district and school test coordinators to provide updated guidance for administering assessments for fall 2020. *(Goals 1, 2)*

**Updated statewide assessment policies and guidelines**
for test security, accommodations and handbooks. *(Goals 1, 2, 4)*
GOAL 2

EVERY Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career
GOAL 2: Key Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implemented Perkins V State Plan</th>
<th>Strengthened work-based learning framework</th>
<th>Helped 20 districts develop career academies for the 2020-21 school year, with a goal of 40 districts in the 2021-22 school year. (Goal 2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>which includes providing quality work-based learning opportunities and industry certification opportunities for Career and Technical Education (CTE) students. (Goal 2)</td>
<td>to include opportunities for pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships as defined in the Mississippi Learn to Earn Act. (Goal 2)</td>
<td></td>
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9,176 students completed CTE programs in 2020, an increase of 33% since 2015
GOAL 2: Key Actions

Implemented legislatively funded Mastery Prep ACT
support platform for 21,965 in-person and virtual students in 48 districts to improve English and mathematics performance. (Goals 2, 4)

Supported legislatively funded JumpStart program
serving approximately 4,700 juniors from 31 schools to improve ACT English sub-scores (year three of program). (Goals 2, 4)

Sent personalized Advanced Placement (AP) potential letters
to the guardians of 3,200 students, based on students’ PSAT scores. (Goal 2)
GOAL 2: Key Actions

- **Created High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) rubrics** for ELA and mathematics for the state’s textbook adoption process and to help districts with local-level selection. (Goals 1, 2, 4, 6)

- **Helped superintendents and principals create updated Dropout Prevention Plans** using new template and worked with Research and Curriculum Unit (RCU) staff to review district plans and develop professional development for the upcoming year. (Goals 1, 2)

- **Provided dyslexia characteristics and classroom accommodations** professional development to teachers and administrators. (Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)
GOAL 3

EVERY Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program
SERVED
3,016 4-year-old children

GOAL 3: Key Actions

18 Early Learning Collaboratives

175 Classrooms

97 Sites Across the State
GOAL 3: Key Actions

Awarded five new districts funding to establish blended pre-K classrooms
bringing program total to 11 districts with 16 blended pre-K classrooms serving 296 children. Blended programs provide inclusive opportunities to students with disabilities. (Goals 1, 3)

Provided professional development to more than 1,100 early childhood staff, administrators and teachers from state agencies, public pre-K, Head Start, childcare centers and other community groups, including sessions on early language development, learning centers and at-home mathematics activities. (Goals 3, 4)

Delivered family engagement sessions and developed new family engagement programs to be delivered in 2021:
  • My Pleasure: Creating a Remarkable School Culture for Serving Families and Children
  • Mississippi Leading Innovative Teaching and Learning Environments in Early Childhood Leadership Institute (Goals 3, 4)
GOAL 4

EVERY School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders
GOAL 4: Key Actions

- Provided professional development sessions in the areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, special education and science.

- Offered districts, schools and teachers professional learning through scheduled sessions, direct support, online courses and on-demand sessions.

- Shifted to virtual sessions and coaching in response to the pandemic.
**GOAL 4: Key Actions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supported more than 50 aspiring, diverse educators in Mississippi Teacher Residency</th>
<th>Retained more than 100 experienced, diverse educators in Performance-Based Licensure</th>
<th>Launched Mississippi Governor’s Education Human Capital Taskforce</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(MTR) pilot with high-quality clinical practice and mentor teacher support. Teacher residents far exceed national average for educator diversity, with 76% of Cohort 1 and 83% of Cohort 2 identifying as people of color. (Goal 4)</td>
<td>(PBL) pilot, which explores alternative pathways to licensure for educators who are making a positive impact on student learning despite not having passed licensure tests. Pilot participants far exceed national average for educator diversity, with 100% identifying as people of color. (Goal 4)</td>
<td>in partnership with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) to ensure key agencies collaborate and take action to increase the effectiveness, quantity and diversity of teachers in Mississippi classrooms. Focus areas include attracting, preparing, licensing, hiring, supporting and retaining teachers. (Goal 4)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
GOAL 4: Key Actions

- Expanded options for entrance into teacher education through increased grade point average (GPA) with the passage of a technical amendment to Miss. Code Ann. § 37-3-2. (Goal 4)

- Developed plans for implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) training in educator preparation programs. (Goal 4)
GOAL 5

EVERY Community Effectively Uses a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes
GOAL 5: Key Actions

Hired Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS) modernization vendor and launched phase 1 of MSIS 2.0 project. (Goal 5)

Re-engineered Mississippi Succeeds Report Card and added new search and comparison tools. (Goals 4, 5, 6)

Established Mississippi’s first K-12 privacy regulations and strengthened MDE’s data governance and student privacy protections by revising and adopting SBE Policy Chapter 55, Rule 55.1: Office of Technology and Strategic Services (OTSS). (Goal 5)
GOAL 6

EVERY School and District is Rated “C” or Higher
**GOAL 6: Key Actions**

| Provided regional professional development on evidence-based interventions, community engagement councils and the importance of grade-level instructional content to help build capacity within districts. (Goals 1, 2, 4, 6) |
| Hosted annual two-day convening with schools identified for improvement with 438 participants. (Goals 1, 2, 4, 6) |
| Implemented tiered coaching support in 58 schools through principal feedback, instructional learning walks, professional learning communities and leadership meetings. (Goals 1, 2, 4, 6) |
**GOAL 6: Key Actions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provided professional development to support new principals</th>
<th>Conducted interviews with the 19 districts</th>
<th>Launched quarterly check-in meetings</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and assistant principals of identified schools to build coherence of improvement efforts. <em>(Goals 1, 2, 4, 6)</em></td>
<td>with Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools focusing on a review of student performance, instructional resources and human and fiscal resources. <em>(Goals 1, 2, 4, 6)</em></td>
<td>between MDE academic education staff and executive leadership to ensure alignment and implementation of MDE supports in the Mississippi Achievement School District and in districts of transformation. <em>(Goals 1, 2, 4, 6)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

View complete list of Key Actions to Advance Strategic Plan: mdek12.org/MBE/StrategicPlan
How We Led National and State Activities
National and State Leadership Roles

- Member, National Assessment Governing Board Executive Committee
- Vice-Chair, Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast Governing Board
- Member, Education Commission of the States
- Member, Chiefs for Change Executive Board
- Member, Science of Learning Development Alliance National Advisory Committee
- Member, Strategic Education Research Partnership Board of Directors
- Member, State Longitudinal Data System Governing Board
- Member, State and School Employees Health Insurance Management Board
- Member, Education Achievement Council
- Member, Mississippi Child Health Council
Legislative Activities

• Worked with Governor, Lt. Governor and House Speaker to mitigate impact of COVID-19 on school districts.

• Maintained regular communication with House and Senate Education Chairs and other key elected leaders.

• Testified in legislative hearings on dual credit/dual enrollment, year-round school and pandemic response.

• Advocated, secured funding and completed legislatively required reporting for Mississippi Connects initiative.
State Superintendent of Education

State Leadership Activities

• Met regularly with Mississippi State Health Department leaders Dr. Thomas Dobbs and Dr. Paul Byers to stay updated about the COVID-19 pandemic and make decisions to ensure the health and safety of students, teachers and school and district leaders and staff.

• Met with all district superintendents during Regional Superintendents’ Meetings and pandemic-related virtual meetings.

• Met regularly with Mississippi Teacher Advisory Council and Superintendents’ Advisory Council.

• Recruited applicants for new Principals’ Advisory Council.

• Met in person and virtually with Mississippi Student Advisory Council, which doubled in size to 163 student representatives.
Presentations

Raised profile of K-12 education and achievement in Mississippi through 35 state and national presentations on a range of topics:

- Literacy
- Early childhood education
- Assessment and accountability
- Chronic absenteeism
- Mississippi Connects digital learning initiative
- Managing impact of COVID-19
- Mississippi K-12 initiatives and achievements
Major Presentation: Chautauqua Institution

- Delivered concluding lecture for Chautauqua Institution's week on *Rebuilding Public Education*, which included presentations from education historian and activist Diane Ravitch and former Florida governor Jeb Bush.

- Highlighted reforms that delivered unprecedented academic success and rising student achievement for Mississippi students.

- The historic Chautauqua lecture platform is dedicated to civil dialogue on matters that shape our world.

- Lecture is available on the Chautauqua website, [assembly.chq.org](http://assembly.chq.org).
News and Media Relations Activities

123 news releases and editorials

• Frequent media interviews
• Mississippi Achieves news blog
• Bi-weekly email digest to teachers and school and district leaders
• School Focus and Connections magazines
• Mississippi School Spotlight and social media videos
• Superintendent’s Annual Report
• Legislative Update
Social Media Growth

Facebook followers **nearly tripled** in one year from **5,985** to **15,505**

Twitter followers **grew** from **6,912** to **8,332**
Major News Feature: Chiefs for Change

- Featured with District of Columbia and Denver superintendents in Chiefs for Change multimedia report, *Teacher to Chief: Pathways to Education Leadership*.

- Report shared stories of bold, innovative chiefs to encourage teachers to consider the highest level of education leadership and explain how systems can create meaningful pathways to help teachers get there.
State Superintendent of Education: State and National Presentations

1. **Starting at Zero** Panel Discussion, Mississippi Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and the Center for Excellence in Literacy Instruction Panel, December 10, 2020


3. **Policy to Practice: What Happens After a Literacy Bill Becomes a Law**, EdPalooza, December 2, 2020

4. **Climate Change Can Be A Good Thing: State Policy Actions to Address School Climate**, EdPalooza Aspen Institute Education & Society Program, December 2, 2020


7. Mississippi Senate Hearing on Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment, November 10, 2020

8. Mississippi Senate Hearing on Year-Round Schools, November 9, 2020

9. National Blue-Ribbon Award Celebration, Center Hill School, Desoto County Schools, November 2, 2020

10. **Why Children can’t read – and what we can do about it**, American Enterprise Institute Panel, October 29, 2020
State Superintendent of Education: State and National Presentations

11. Advancing Early Literacy in Mississippi, Presentation to Kentucky Task Force on Teacher Preparation and Professional Learning: Literacy and Numeracy for Primary Grades, October 8, 2020

12. Assessment and Accountability in the Year Ahead, Accountability and Reporting Webinar, Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) State of the States, October 6, 2020

13. Building a High-Quality Early Childhood Education Infrastructure, Presentation to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Mississippi Economic Council and Children’s Foundation of Mississippi, September 29, 2020

14. Conversations with Chiefs, Reagan Institute Summit on Education (RISE) 2020, September 17, 2020

15. 2020-21 Mississippi Teaching Policy Fellows Kickoff, TeachPlus, August 19, 2020


17. Grade Transition in COVID-19 Era, Hunt Institute: Homeroom with Mississippi and Alabama Education Leaders, August 11, 2020

18. What Has Worked in Reforming Mississippi’s Education System, Chautauqua Institution, August 7, 2020

19. Aligning Policy and Practice to Improve 3rd Grade Outcomes in the Era of COVID-19, National Governors Association Symposium: Critical Aspects to Support PreK to Grade 3, August 4, 2020

21. *Maintaining Momentum in Mississippi*, Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, July 14, 2020

22. *Mississippi Digital Learning Plan*, Mississippi Alliance of Nonprofits and Philanthropy, July 9, 2020


24. *Safely Reopening Mississippi Schools Amid COVID-19*, Mississippi Legislative Black Caucus, June 18, 2020

25. *Advancing Education in Mississippi*, University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, MS, February 25, 2020

26. *Advancing Education in Mississippi*, Education Achievement Council, Jackson, MS, February 25, 2020

27. Keynote Address, REL-Southeast Governing Board, Ponte Vedra, FL, February 2, 2020


29. *Mississippi’s Strategy to Advance Literacy and Improve Student Achievement*, CCSSO Chief Academic Officer/Chief Talent Officer Collaborative Convening, Albuquerque, NM, January 28, 2020

31. Leading is a Team Sport: The Mississippi Story, National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) Annual Conference, Omaha, NE, October 18, 2019

32. Mississippi Literacy Summit, Welcome Remarks, Jackson Convention Center, Jackson, MS, September 13, 2019

33. Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Programs, Panel Discussion with Fellows, Children’s Foundation of Mississippi, Jackson, MS, September 9, 2019

34. Mississippi’s Strategy to Support Early Literacy, presentation to North Carolina, Mississippi Momentum Partnership, Barksdale Reading Institute, Jackson, MS, August 13, 2019

35. 2019 Elevate Teachers Conference, Welcome Remarks, Jackson Convention Center, Jackson, MS, July 8, 2019

Note: MDE leaders also support public education through presentations and their work on local, state and national boards and commissions and their service as experts on policy and practice in their respective fields.

View complete list of Key Actions to Advance Strategic Plan: mdek12.org/MBE/StrategicPlan
Where We Stand
2019-20 Achievements
### Mississippi: 2nd Most Improved State

- **Earned national recognition** for progress in education for the 3rd consecutive year
- **No. 2 state** or jurisdiction with the greatest improvement
- C grade in chance-for-success index
- C- overall grade, just shy of the nation’s grade of C
- Key advances in 4th grade reading and 8th grade math drove Mississippi’s improvement

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<td>70.5 C-</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>69.9 C-</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>68.6 D+</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>74.2 C</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EdWeek Research Center, 2020
Category: Overall Most Improved States
Mississippi Education Continues to Climb in Annie E. Casey Foundation Annual KIDS COUNT® 2020 Data Book

- Mississippi experienced the greatest improvement in education from 2019 to 2020.
- National ranking climbed from 44th to 39th.
- Gains in high school graduation and 4th grade literacy contributed to the rise in achievement.
National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) Named Mississippi One of Only Four States Meeting All Quality Standards for Pre-K

- Mississippi’s Early Learning Collaboratives meet all 10 of NIEER’s new quality standards.

- NIEER tracks state-funded preschool access, resources and quality.

- Early Learning Collaborative students start kindergarten more prepared than students in Mississippi’s other public pre-K programs.
Mississippi Wins Southern Regional Education Board’s (SREB) 2020 State Leadership Award

• Mississippi Department of Education wins SREB 2020 State Leadership Award for increasing literacy and mathematics achievement and building networked communities focused on school improvement in the middle grades.

• Award recognizes states with established processes that help schools transform classroom practices, sustain change and increase student achievement.
2020 SREB Report: Mississippi Leads in K-12 Progress and College Persistence Among Southern States


- Report details how the effective implementation of education policy improved student achievement statewide and made Mississippi the leader in the South for college persistence.

- Mississippi is the only state in region in which the first-year persistence rate of first-time, full-time students at public, four-year colleges and universities increased from 2012 to 2017.

- Rate increase indicates more first-time, full-time Mississippi college students returned to college for a second year.
MISSISSIPPI SUCCEEDS
Rising to the Challenge

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

January 21, 2021
ADDENDUM

Mississippi State Board of Education Strategic Plan Annual Status Report
Additional Key Actions to Advance Goals 2019-20
January 21, 2021

Goal 1: All Students Proficient and Showing Growth in All Assessed Areas

- Developed *Ask a Literacy Coach-Coaching on Demand* web link to aid all K-5 teachers and administrators. (Goal 1)
- Developed digital literacy instruction series for K-5 teachers, which included: A suggested Beginning of the Year (BOY) Checklist and instructional descriptions that define each portion of the section; virtual student engagement (how to keep your students involved during screen time); a sample virtual weekly schedule that gives sample for minutes and both types of virtual instruction; an example virtual weekly lesson plan from Core Knowledge (CKLA) that was adapted from a traditional setting to a virtual setting; suggestions on how to measure and assess virtual learning; and suggested teacher priorities during virtual instruction. (Goals 1, 3, 4)
- Revised the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) guidance documents to ensure alignment with Literacy-Based Promotion Act (LBPA) and alleviate redundancy. (Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Updated Individual Reading Plan to align with MTSS Documentation Packet (Goals 1, 2, 4)
- Conducted weekly MTSS virtual office hours to answer questions from schools and districts. (Goal 4)
- Provided specific MTSS trainings for local schools and districts to ensure they understand the three-tiered intervention process (Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Partnered with Algebra Nation to create professional development resources on the DESMOS calculator (dedicated webpage, pre-recorded training, and activities) for classroom teachers on how to implement the DESMOS calculator in Algebra I classes and on the MAAP Algebra I assessment. (Goals 1, 2, 4)
- Developed teacher supports including science practice tests and annotated writing samples with additional writing guidance for state assessments. (Goals 1, 2, 4)
- Conducted English Language Proficiency training for districts that provided hands-on approach to registering students and understanding the LAS Links system. (Goals 1, 2, 4)
- Solicited assessment guidance and assistance from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), which includes psychometricians and large-scale assessment experts from across the nation. (Goals 1, 2, 5, 6)
Goal 2: Every Student Graduates from High School and is Ready for College and Career

- Began development of a 10-year state plan for computer science education, to inform topics such as access, teacher preparation, funding, and infrastructure, in an ongoing effort to expand the computer science initiative launched in 2016. (Goal 2)
- Provided Family Guides for Student Success to schools and districts for students in grades pre-K through 8. (Goals 1, 2)
- Implemented year four of statewide Algebra Nation program to continue improving student achievement in Algebra I. (Goals 2, 4)
- Continued implementation of the Seal of Biliteracy program across the state for high school and developed a Seal of Biliteracy supplemental resource for MSIS reporting seniors. (Goals 2, 4)
- Hosted Mississippi Association for Career and Technical Education (MSACTE) statewide virtual conference for 1,062 CTE teachers, counselors and administrators. (Goals 2, 4)
- Hosted Innovative Leadership Summit for 92 Mississippi education leaders. (Goals 2, 4)
- Hosted the Innovative Summer Institute virtually for 293 teachers, counselors and administrators. (Goals 2, 4)
- Hosted nine virtual College and Career Readiness (CCR) trainings for CCR teachers and conducted monthly webinars for teachers to provide support for Canvas and the CCR course. (Goals 2, 4)
- Hosted twice-weekly virtual office hours for all special education directors. (Goals 2, 4)
- Developed Individualized Education Program (IEP) guidance document for special education and general education teachers and administrators. (Goals 2, 4)
- Provided on-demand training and support to teachers and administrators regarding supporting students with disabilities. (Goals 2, 4, 6)
- Provided support to all special education directors with 0-3 years’ experience through the Office of Special Education New Director Mentoring Program. (Goal 4)
- Developed pre-recorded trainings for K-12 classroom teachers on the integration of the Arts Learning Standards using innovative technology, artistic processes and creative practices. (Goals 2, 4)
- Created instructional resources for the arts (dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts). (Goals 2, 4)
- Began revision of the Mississippi School Counselor Handbook as a resource aligned with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Model 4th edition. (Goals 2, 4)
- Hosted ongoing professional development and technical assistance with 18 science educators within the Mississippi Achievement School District (MASD). (Goals 2, 4)
- Hosted ongoing professional development and technical assistance with science teachers in targeted school districts. (Goals 2, 4)
- Provided statewide training on the educational shifts that support HQIM in ELA Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter website for teachers and districts to recognize and select HQIM. (Goals 1, 2, 3, 4)
• Developed the Restart and Recovery document to support and provide guidance to school administrators regarding the education of students with disabilities during the pandemic and recovery period. (Goals 2, 4, 6)
• Issued guidance and frequently asked questions regarding educating students with disabilities during school closures due to COVID-19 through individual meetings with districts and the special education director listserv. (Goals 2, 4, 6)
• Revised and implemented new SBE policy for the Educational Scholarship Account (ESA). (Goals 1, 2)
• Revised SBE policy for Advanced Placement teachers to expand opportunities for all students to participate in Advanced Placement classes. (Goals 1, 2)

Collaborations and Partnerships:

• Southern Regional Education Board (SREB): To implement year three of middle school pilot to improve student achievement, student discipline and leadership practices across 19 middle schools. (Goals 1, 2, 4)
• Mississippi State University Research and Curriculum Unit (RCU): To develop and implement Mississippi Alternate Academic Achievement Standards (MSAAAS) for students with significant cognitive disabilities. (Goals 2, 4)
• RCU: To develop and release Teacher Resources Guides (TRG) aligned to the MSAAAS for students with significant cognitive disabilities. (Goals 2, 4)
• RCU: To continue providing resources and training to school counselors in promoting equitable school counselor programs that offer CTE courses, dual enrollment and AP courses for all students. (Goals 2, 4)
• Get2College: To develop resources and training for school counselors, students, and parents to meet the needs of in-person and virtual students. (Goals 2, 4)
• NASA: To begin aligning NASA resources with the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards for Science. (Goals 2, 4)
• Teaching Lab group: To work with approximately 30 math educators (teachers, lead teachers, and coaches) to improve instructional strategies, coaching supports at the local level, evaluation of student work, and resource-standard alignment. (Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 6)
Goal 3: Every Child Has Access to a High-Quality Early Childhood Program

- Delivered virtual Early Childhood Specialized Training to 172 educators in a six-hour onboarding session; 103 educators are currently participating in the full nine-month online program. (Goals 3, 4)
- Continued data system development with Web-based Early Learning Systems (WELS) to house coaches’ notes and collaborative program aggregate data. (Goals 3, 5)
- Developed and recorded 12 episodes of the early childhood segment, Welcome Friends, for new MPB channel. (Goal 3)
- Developed family engagement documents to support teachers and families, including Family Engagement Calendar and Family Back-to-School Guide. (Goal 3)
- Participated with Ed Counsel to align birth through grade 12 efforts by aligning pre-K social and emotional learning (SEL) standards to K-12 SEL standards. (Goal 3)
- Awarded 18 teachers a certificate of completion who have completed the requirements from 2019-20 Early Childhood Specialized Training and are eligible to submit application to receive the Pre-K endorsement; 41 assistant teachers completed the requirements from 2019-20 and received their certificate of completion. (Goals 3, 4)
Goal 4: Every School Has Effective Teachers and Leaders

- Developed process to accept electronic transcripts directly from the registrar’s office of any college or university. (Goal 4)
- Enabled the online Educator License Management System (ELMS) to accept a broader range of supporting documents, eliminating need for applicants to mail the documents. (Goal 4)
- Reviewed and processed licensure applications seven days a week, during and outside of normal business hours. (Goal 4)
- Extended licensure application expiration date period from 30 to 120 days. (Goal 4)
- Implemented automatic issuance of district-requested year-one emergency certificate, one year reinstatement of standard educator license; provided one year extension to all licenses scheduled to expire June 30, 2020; suspended educator preparation program entry testing requirement through December 31, 2021; and suspended educator licensure testing requirement through December 31, 2021. (Goal 4)
- Implemented computer-based licensure call center software that enabled stakeholders to reach licensure call center staff during COVID-19-related building closures. (Goal 4)
- Implemented system to collect and manage data and reports for recruitment contacts. (Goal 4)
- Increased math educator pipelines by adopting Praxis subject assessments and SBE-approved passing scores for Algebra I and Geometry to add an Algebra or Geometry licensure endorsement to an appropriate Mississippi teaching license. (Goal 4)
- Trained more than 1,000 school and district leaders on the Mississippi Professional Growth System (PGS). (Goal 4)
- Developed a practice-based, virtual professional growth training system that uses a combination of pre-, during, and post-training to increase effective observation and feedback through PGS resource familiarization, an educator case study, and score calibration. (Goal 4)
- Created the Mississippi Tech Help Facebook group for teachers to share resources and problems around implementing technology. (Goal 4)
- Provided training and professional development to 102 new and first-year academic guidance counselors at new counselor workshops in fall 2020. (Goal 4)
- Provided Google training to literacy coaches and school improvement coaches to enhance their support of classroom teachers in the delivery of instructional content through Google Classroom. (Goal 4)
- Piloted a strengthened program review process with educator preparation programs. (Goal 4)
- Conducted four virtual national site visits with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). (Goal 4)

Partnerships:

- Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR), the University of Mississippi, Delta State University and William Carey University: To strengthen education preparation programs in the areas of policy, communication, data, preparation, practice, recruitment and retention. (Goal 4)
- CCSSO: Participated in collaboratives for Systems to Elevate Excellence in Teaching and School Leader Development and Support. (Goal 4)
• CCSSO, CEEDAR and the Oak Foundation: To continue implementation of inclusive practice in leader preparation through a multi-state initiative. (Goals 1, 2, 4)
• nSPARC and the Educator Preparation Provider Collaborative Committee (EPPCC). To create an educator preparation program impact report. (Goal 4)
• Mississippi Education Leadership Faculty Association (MELFA): To pilot common assessments for principal preparation that include PGS training, school improvement efforts, safe and orderly schools, and family and community relations. (Goal 4)
• Region 7 Comprehensive Center (R7CC): To strengthen the PGS. (Goal 4)
• R7CC: To increase literacy statewide. (Goal 4)
• Educator preparation providers: To conduct virtual teacher recruitment fairs. (Goal 4)
Goal 5: Every Community Effectively Using a World-Class Data System to Improve Student Outcomes

- Analyzed and documented current key MSIS processes that OTSS will need to re-engineer to support the development and operation of new MSIS 2.0 system. (Goal 5)
- Established process standards and goals for key MSIS processes that OTSS will need to re-engineer to support the development and operation of new MSIS 2.0 system. (Goal 5)
- Conducted focus groups with districts to document challenges with the current MSIS collection and reporting processes and to prioritize needs the new MSIS 2.0 system will need to address. (Goal 5)
- Redeveloped two key reports – the federally required District CTE Summary Report and the State Assessment File for federal EdFacts reporting – as part of an ongoing effort to improve efficiency, transparency, consistency and interoperability through automation. (Goal 5)
- Documented data elements, business rules, and reporting requirements for all current MSIS data collections. (Goal 5)
- Completed second annual security audit and addressed identified concerns. (Goal 5)
- Required security awareness training and tested all MDE employees. (Goal 5)
Goal 6: Every School and District is Rated C or Higher

- Shifted school improvement supports for coaches, schools and districts to virtual delivery to develop coaches’ capacity in using virtual platforms (Teams, Zoom, Google) and provide professional learning in a virtual platform for schools and districts. (Goals 1, 2, 4, 6)
- Continued partnership with John Hopkins University (Everyone Graduates Center) high schools with a low graduation rate. (Goals 1, 2, 4, 6)