

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
July 19-20, 2012

OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION

29. Approval to revise process standards in the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2010*
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process with public comments)

On June 7, 2012, the Commission on School Accreditation approved revisions to process Standards 4, 19, 20, and Appendix A and D, of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2010*.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
STANDARD 20**

**SENIORS OF SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009, 2009-2010 & 2010-2011
(Entering ninth graders in 2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008)**

Each student graduating from a secondary school in an accredited school district will have earned the required Carnegie units as specified in the following table. Contents of each required and elective course must include the core objectives identified in the *Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks*. Course titles and identification numbers must appear in the current edition of *Approved Courses for Secondary Schools of Mississippi*. (See SB Policies 2902 and 2903.) Enrollment in on-line and correspondence courses listed in this book must have prior approval granted by the principal. No more than one of the minimum required number of units may be earned through completion of an approved correspondence course. ~~Elective courses that do not have identified content in the *Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks* or whose titles do not appear in the current edition of *Approved Courses for the Secondary Schools of Mississippi* must be approved according to criteria stated in Appendix D.~~

Any student who completes the minimum graduation requirements as specified below and has achieved a passing score on each of the required high school exit examinations is eligible to receive a high school diploma. The local school district may establish additional local requirements approved by the local school board as authorized under MS Code 37-16-7.

CURRICULUM AREA	CARNEGIE UNITS	REQUIRED SUBJECTS
ENGLISH	4 ¹	
MATHEMATICS	4 ²	Algebra I
SCIENCE	3 ³	Biology I
SOCIAL STUDIES	3	1 World History ⁴ 1 U.S. History ⁴ ½ U.S. Government ½ Mississippi Studies ⁵
HEALTH	½ ⁶ & ⁷	Comprehensive Health <i>or</i> Family and Individual Health
BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY	1 ⁸	1 Computer Discovery or ½ Keyboarding and ½ Computer Applications
THE ARTS	1	Any approved 500.000 course or completion of the 2-course sequence for Computer Graphics Technology I and II
ELECTIVES	4½ ⁹	
TOTAL UNITS REQUIRED	21	

APPENDIX A-1 (Continued)
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
STANDARD 20

SENIORS OF SCHOOL YEAR 2008-2009, 2009-2010 & 2010-2011
(Entering ninth graders in 2005-2006, 2006-2007 & 2007-2008)

¹ Compensatory Reading and Compensatory Writing may not be included in the four English courses required for graduation; however, these courses may be included in the 4½ general electives required for graduation. MYP-English I and MYP English II are accepted in lieu of the English I and English II requirements for students enrolled in the IB program.

² Compensatory Mathematics and any developmental mathematics course may not be included in the four mathematics courses required for graduation; however, these courses may be included in the 4½ general electives required for graduation. Beginning school year 2004-2005 for all entering eighth graders, at least one of the four required mathematics courses must be higher than Algebra I. The allowable mathematics courses that can be taken which are higher than Algebra I are: Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Algebra, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, Discrete Mathematics, Statistics, and AP Statistics. One of the four required mathematics units may be in Drafting if the student completes the 2-course sequence for Drafting I & II. Effective with the eighth graders of 2004-2005, Pre-Algebra, Transition to Algebra, and Algebra I, may be taken in the eighth grade for Carnegie unit credit. MYP Geometry, MYP Algebra II, IB-DP Mathematics I, IB-DP Mathematics II, IB-DP Mathematical Studies I, IB-DP Mathematical Studies II are allowable mathematics courses higher than Algebra I for IB students.

³ One unit may be in Introduction to Agriscience, Concepts of Agriscience, Science of Agricultural Plants, Science of Agricultural Animals, or Science of Agricultural Environment. Two units may be in the following courses if the student completes the 2-course sequence: Agriscience I & II; Allied Health I & II; Aquaculture I & II; Forestry I & II; Horticulture I & II; Plastics and Polymer Science I & II; and Technology Applications I & II. Two units may be earned by completing the following AEST 3-course sequence: one unit in Concepts of Agriscience; one unit in Science of Agricultural Animals or Science of Agricultural Plants, or Science of Agricultural Environment; and one unit in Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship. IB-DP Physics I, IB-DP Physics II, MYP Chemistry, and IB-DP Chemistry may be accepted as allowable lab-based physical science courses for students enrolled in the IB program. MYP Biology and IB-DP Biology I may be accepted in lieu of the Biology I requirement for students enrolled in an IB program.

⁴ **Based on the 2004 Mississippi Social Studies framework**, AP European History or AP World History can be accepted in lieu of World History. Advanced placement U.S. History is accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History from 1877 to present. AP Government and Politics: United States can be accepted in lieu of the required United States Government course. A.P. Macroeconomics or A.P. Microeconomics can be taken in lieu of the required Economics course. A.P. Human Geography can be accepted in lieu of the required Geography course. IB-DP History of the Americas I is accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History Course for students enrolled in the IB program. IB-DP History of the Americas II is accepted in lieu of the required Mississippi Studies, Economics, and/or U.S. Government courses for students enrolled in the IB program. MYP U. S. Government is accepted in lieu of the required Government course for students enrolled in the IB program.

Based on the 2011 Mississippi Social Studies framework, A.P. World History can be accepted in lieu of the required World History from the Age of Enlightenment to Present course. A.P. United States History can be accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History from Post-reconstruction to Present course. A.P. Government and Politics: United States can be accepted in lieu of the required United States Government course, A.P. Macroeconomics or A.P. Microeconomics can be taken in lieu of the required Economics course, A.P. Human Geography can be accepted in lieu of the required Geography course. IB-DP History of the Americas I is accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History course for students enrolled in the IB program. IB-DP History of the Americas II is accepted in lieu of the required Mississippi Studies, Economics, and/or U.S. Government courses for students enrolled in the IB program. MYP U.S. Government is accepted in lieu of the required Government course for students enrolled in the IB program.

⁵ The credit earned for a State/Local Government course in any other state by an out-of-state transfer student who enters after the sophomore year can stand in lieu of Mississippi Studies or Mississippi State and Local Government. If the transfer student took a State/Local Government course in a grade level that did not award Carnegie unit credit, then any other ½ unit social studies course may be accepted. An out-of-state student who transfers after the junior year may substitute any other ½ unit social studies course.

⁶ Credit earned in Allied Health I/Health Science I may be accepted in lieu of Comprehensive Health or Family and Individual Health to meet the graduation requirement for ½ Carnegie unit in Health.

⁷ Successful completion of JROTC I and JROTC II may be accepted in lieu of Comprehensive Health or Family and Individual Health to meet the graduation requirement for ½ Carnegie unit in Health beginning in the 2010-2011 school year and thereafter, when instruction includes all health components in the JROTC curriculum.

⁸ Evidence of proficiency in Keyboarding and Computer Applications is accepted in lieu of the required courses if the student earns one unit in any of the courses listed in the *Business and Technology Framework* (academic and vocational). Information & Computer Technology (ICT) II may be accepted in lieu of Computer Discovery. A Carnegie unit earned for Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) in the 8th or 9th grade meets this graduation requirement. Technology Foundations replaces Computer Discovery, Keyboarding and Computer Applications and meets this graduation requirement when taken in grades 8-12. MYP Computer Discovery may be accepted in lieu of Computer Discovery for students enrolled in an IB program.

⁹ Elective units in physical education include participation in interscholastic athletic activities, band, performance choral, dance and JROTC that meet the instructional requirements specified in the *Fitness through Physical Education Framework* and that are sanctioned by the Mississippi High School Activities Association.

APPENDIX A-2

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
STANDARD 20**

**SENIORS OF SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012
(Entering ninth graders in 2008-2009, and thereafter)**

Each student graduating from a secondary school in an accredited school district will have earned the required Carnegie units as specified in the following table. Contents of each required and elective course must include the core objectives identified in the *Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks*. Course titles and identification numbers must appear in the current edition of *Approved Courses for Secondary Schools of Mississippi*. (See SB Policies 2902 and 2903) Enrollment in on-line and correspondence courses listed in this book must have prior approval granted by the principal. No more than one of the minimum required number of units may be earned through completion of approved correspondence course. *Elective courses that do not have identified content in the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks or whose titles do not appear in the current edition of Approved Courses for the Secondary Schools of Mississippi must be approved according to criteria stated in Appendix D.*

Any student who completes the minimum graduation requirements as specified below and has achieved a passing score on each of the required high school exit examinations is eligible to receive a high school diploma. The local school district may establish additional local requirements approved by the local school board as authorized under MS Code 37-16-7.

Beginning school year 2008-2009 and thereafter, all entering ninth graders (seniors of school year 2011-2012 and later) will be required to have a minimum of 24 Carnegie units as specified below, unless their parent/guardian requests to opt the student out of Appendix A-2 requirements *in accordance with local school board policy*. Any student who is taken out of these requirements of Appendix A-2 will be required to complete the graduation requirements as specified in Appendix A-1. The local school district may establish additional local requirements approved by the local school board as authorized under MS Code 37-16-7.

CURRICULUM AREA	CARNEGIE UNITS	REQUIRED SUBJECTS
ENGLISH	4 ¹	English I English II
MATHEMATICS	4 ²	Algebra I
SCIENCE	4 ³	Biology I
SOCIAL STUDIES	4	1 World History ⁴ 1 U.S. History ⁴ ½ Geography ⁴ ½ U.S. Government ½ Economics ⁵ ½ Mississippi Studies ⁶
HEALTH and PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1 ^{7&8}	½ Comprehensive Health <i>or</i> ½ Family & Individual Health and ½ Physical Education ^{9&11}
BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY	1 ¹⁰	1 Computer Discovery or ½ Keyboarding and ½ Computer Applications
THE ARTS	1	Any approved 500.000 course or completion of the 2-course sequence for Computer Graphics Technology I and II
ELECTIVES	5 ¹¹	
TOTAL UNITS REQUIRED	24	

APPENDIX A-2 (Continued)
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
STANDARD 20
SENIORS OF SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012
(Entering ninth graders in 2008-2009, and thereafter)

¹Compensatory Reading and Compensatory Writing may not be included in the four English courses required for graduation; however, these courses may be included in the 5 general electives required for graduation. Accelerated English 9 can be accepted in lieu of English I. Accelerated English 10 and AP English Language Composition can be accepted in lieu of English II. Beginning school year 2010-2011 for all entering ninth graders, English I is a required prerequisite course for English II. English I may not be taken after a student completes English II.

²Compensatory Mathematics, Introduction to Engineering, and any developmental mathematics course may not be included in the four mathematics courses required for graduation; however, these courses may be included in the 5 general electives required for graduation. Effective with the eighth graders of 2008-2009, Pre-Algebra and Transition to Algebra may not be taken after a student completes Algebra I. Beginning school year 2007-2008 for all entering eighth graders, at least two of the four required mathematics courses must be higher than Algebra I. Effective with ninth graders of 2010-2011, Survey of Mathematical Topics may not be included in the two math courses higher than Algebra I. The allowable mathematics courses that can be taken which are higher than Algebra I are: Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Algebra, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, Discrete Mathematics, Statistics, and AP Statistics. MYP Geometry, MYP Algebra II, IB-DP Mathematics I, IB-DP Mathematics II, IB-DP Mathematical Studies I, IB-DP Mathematical Studies II are allowable mathematics courses higher than Algebra I for IB students. One of the four required mathematics units may be in Drafting if the student completes the 2-course sequence for Drafting I & II. One of the four required mathematics units may be in Survey of Mathematical Topics; however this course does not meet the mathematics requirement for admission to institutions of higher learning. Effective with the eighth graders of 2004-2005, Pre-Algebra, Transition to Algebra, and Algebra I, may be taken in the eighth grade for Carnegie unit credit. Effective with the eighth graders of 2008-2009, Geometry may be taken in the eighth grade for Carnegie unit credit. Effective with the seventh graders of 2012-13, Pre Algebra, Algebra I, Biology I, ICT II (Information and Communication Technology) and first year Foreign Language may be taken in the seventh grade for Carnegie unit credit provided the course content is the same as the high school course. Effective with the 8th graders of 2012-13, second year Foreign Language and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics), may be taken in the 8th grade for Carnegie unit credit provided the course content is the same as the high school course.

³ One unit may be in Concepts of Agriscience, and a second unit may be in completing 2 of the following 3 courses: Science of Agriculture Plants, Science of Agriculture Animals, ~~Science and~~ Science of Agricultural Environment. Two units may be in the following courses if the student completes the required course sequence ending with Agriscience II, Allied Health II, Aquaculture II, Forestry II, Plastics and Polymer Science II, Technology Applications II, Polymer Science II or Careers in Polymer Science, Horticulture II or Horticulture Landscape and Turfgrass, Engineering II or Applied Engineering Concepts, Health Sciences II or Workplace and Employment Skills in Health Sciences.

Beginning school year 2008-2009 for all entering eighth graders, one unit must be a lab-based physical science. The allowable lab-based physical science courses are Physical Science, Chemistry, AP Chemistry, Physics, AP Physics B, AP Physics C – Electricity and Magnetism, and AP Physics C – Mechanics. IB-DP Physics I, IB-DP Physics II, MYP Chemistry, and IB-DP Chemistry may be accepted as allowable lab-based physical science courses for students enrolled in the IB program. MYP Biology and IB-DP Biology I may be accepted in lieu of the Biology I requirement for students enrolled in an IB program.

⁴ **Based on the 2004 Mississippi Social Studies framework**, Advanced Placement Human Geography is accepted in lieu of the required Geography course. A.P. United States History can be accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History from 1877 to Present course. A.P. World History can be accepted in lieu of the required World History from 1795 to Present course. A.P. Government and Politics: United States can be accepted in lieu of the required United States Government course. A.P. Macroeconomics or A.P. Microeconomics can be taken in lieu of the required Economics course. MYP World Geography is accepted in lieu of the required Geography course for

students enrolled in the IB program. Advanced placement U.S. History is accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History from 1877 to Present. IB-DP History of the Americas I is accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History Course for students enrolled in the IB program. IB-DP History of the Americas II is accepted in lieu of the required Mississippi Studies, Economics, and/or U.S. Government courses for students enrolled in the IB program. MYP U.S. Government is accepted in lieu of the required Government course for students enrolled in the IB program. AP European History or AP World History can be accepted in lieu of World History.

Based on the 2011 Mississippi Social Studies framework, A.P. World History can be accepted in lieu of the required World History from the Age of Enlightenment to Present course. A.P. United States History can be accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History from Post-reconstruction to Present course. A.P. Government and Politics: United States can be accepted in lieu of the required United States Government course. A.P. Macroeconomics or A.P. Microeconomics can be taken in lieu of the required Economics course. A.P. Human Geography can be accepted in lieu of the required Geography course. MYP World Geography is accepted in lieu of the required Geography course for students enrolled in the IB program. IB-DP History of the Americas I is accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History course for students enrolled in the IB program. IB-DP History of the Americas II is accepted in lieu of the required Mississippi Studies, Economics, and/or U.S. Government courses for students enrolled in the IB program. MYP U.S. Government is accepted in lieu of the required Government course for students enrolled in the IB program.

⁵ Credit earned for Business Fundamentals or Business Fundamentals II may be accepted in lieu of ½ unit in Economics.

⁶ The credit earned for a State/Local Government course in any other state by an out-of-state transfer student who enters after the sophomore year can stand in lieu of Mississippi Studies or Mississippi State and Local Government. If the transfer student took a State/Local Government course in a grade level that did not award Carnegie unit credit, then any other ½ unit social studies course may be accepted. An out-of-state student who transfers after the junior year may substitute any other ½ unit social studies course.

⁷ Credit earned in Allied Health I, Health Sciences I, or Theory and Application of Health Sciences I, may be accepted in lieu of Comprehensive Health or Family and Individual Health to meet the graduation requirement for ½ Carnegie unit in Health.

⁸ Successful completion of JROTC I and JROTC II may be accepted in lieu of Comprehensive Health or Family and Individual Health to meet the graduation requirement for ½ Carnegie unit in Health beginning in the 2010-2011 school year and thereafter.

⁹ The graduation requirement for ½ unit in physical education may include participation in interscholastic athletic activities, band, dance and JROTC that meet the instructional requirements specified in the *Fitness through Physical Education Framework* and that are sanctioned by the Mississippi High School Activities Association.

¹⁰ Evidence of proficiency in Keyboarding and Computer Applications is accepted in lieu of the required courses if the student earns one unit in any of the courses listed in the *Business and Technology Framework* (academic and vocational). ICT II may be accepted in lieu of Computer Discovery. A Carnegie unit earned for Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) in the 8th or 9th grade meets this graduation requirement. Technology Foundations replaces Computer Discovery. Keyboarding and Computer Applications and meets this graduation requirement when taken in grades 8-12. MYP Computer Discovery may be accepted in lieu of Computer Discovery for students enrolled in an IB program.

¹¹ Only one elective unit in physical education including participation in interscholastic athletic activities, band, performance choral, dance or JROTC that meet the instructional requirements specified in the *Fitness through Physical Education Framework* and that are sanctioned by the Mississippi High School Activities Association may be applied each year to the minimum 24 required state units. If a local district has graduation requirements above the state requirements they may award additional credits as outlined in the local Board policy.

APPENDIX A-3

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
STANDARD 20**

**CAREER PATHWAY OPTION
SENIORS OF SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012
(Entering eleventh graders in 2010-2011)**

In 2010, Mississippi state policymakers passed legislation to create multiple pathways to a standard diploma. The 2010 legislative actions created a career pathway to a standard diploma, with the goal of improving Mississippi graduation rates and providing students with career and technical training that prepare students for postsecondary credential or certification programs and employable workplace skills. This legislative change created Section 37-16-17, *Mississippi code of 1972*, as amended to provide for high school career option programs and career track curricula for students not wishing to pursue a baccalaureate degree.

CURRICULUM AREA	CARNEGIE UNITS	REQUIRED SUBJECTS
ENGLISH	4¹	English I English II
MATHEMATICS	3²	Algebra I
SCIENCE	3³	Biology I
SOCIAL STUDIES	3^{4, 5}	1 U.S. History ½ U.S. Government ½ Mississippi Studies
HEALTH and PHYSICAL EDUCATION	½⁶	½ Comprehensive Health, or ½ Family and Individual Health, or ½ Physical Education
CAREER and TECHNICAL	4⁷	(Selected from Student's Program of Study)
INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY	1⁸	Computer Discovery, ICT II, 9th STEM, or Computer Applications and Keyboarding
ADDITIONAL ELECTIVES	2 ½⁹	Courses selected from the student's approved program of study
TOTAL UNITS REQUIRED	21¹⁰	

NOTE: Mississippi's Institution of Higher Learning requirements differ from minimum graduation requirements for this diploma pathway.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Standard 20

Career Pathway Option

SENIORS OF SCHOOL YEAR 2011-2012

(Entering eleventh graders 2010-2011)

¹ Compensatory Reading and Compensatory Writing shall not be included in the four English courses required for graduation. The two additional English credits must be from the student's program of study which includes Technical Writing, Creative Writing, English III, English IV, or any college-level dual credit courses.

² Compensatory Mathematics may not be included in the three mathematics courses required for graduation. Effective with eighth graders of 2008-2009, Pre-Algebra and Transition to Algebra may not be taken after a student completes Algebra I. For students pursuing the Career Pathway Graduation Option, at least one of the required mathematics courses must be above Algebra I and selected from the student's program of study. The allowable mathematics courses that can be taken which are higher than Algebra I are: Geometry, Algebra II, Survey of Mathematical Topics, Advanced Algebra, Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, Discrete Mathematics, Statistics, and AP Statistics, or any college-level dual credit courses. Effective with the eighth graders of 2004-2005, Pre-Algebra, Transition to Algebra, and Algebra I, may be taken in the eighth grade for Carnegie unit credit. Effective with the eighth graders of 2008-2009, Geometry may be taken in the eighth grade for Carnegie unit credit.

³ For students pursuing the Career Pathway Graduation Option, at least one of the required science courses must be above Biology I and selected from the student's program of study. If a student's program of study allows, one unit may be in Concepts of Agriscience (AEST). A second science unit may be earned by completing a two course sequence selected from the following three options: Science of Agricultural Animals, Science of Agricultural Plants, or Science of Agricultural Environment. Two units may be in the following courses if the student completes the 2-course sequence: Agriscience I & II; Allied Health I & II; Health Science I & II, Aquaculture I & II; Forestry I & II; Horticulture I & II; Polymer Science I & II; Technology Applications I & II and Engineering I & II.

⁴ Advanced placement U.S. History is accepted in lieu of the required U.S. History 1877 to Present. The third social studies credit should be selected based on the student's program of study.

⁵ The credit earned for a State/Local Government course in any other state by an out-of-state transfer student who enters after the sophomore year can stand in lieu of Mississippi Studies or Mississippi State and Local Government. If the transfer student took a State/Local Government course in a grade level that did not award Carnegie unit credit, then any other ½ unit social studies course may be accepted. An out-of-state student who transfers after the junior year may substitute any other ½ unit social studies course. Credit earned for the first year of Marketing and Economics (Vocational) may be accepted in lieu of ½ unit in Economics.

⁶ Credit earned in Allied Health I/Health Science I may be accepted in lieu of Comprehensive Health or Family and Individual Health to meet the graduation requirement for ½ Carnegie unit in Health. Interscholastic athletic activities, band, and ROTC if they meet the instructional requirements specified in the *Fitness through Physical Education Framework* may also be accepted.

⁷ Career and Technical (CTE) courses must be based on the student's program of study and should include dual credit/dual enrollment options as found in Section 37-15-38 of the Mississippi Code of 1972.

⁸ Evidence of proficiency in technology is accepted in lieu of the required courses if the student earns one unit in a technology-rich academic or career technical course related to their program of study.

⁹ Electives must be selected from courses related to the student's program of study. Credits earned not approved for that student's program of study will not be counted toward graduation requirements.

¹⁰ See the following web site for information concerning equivalency course allowances for all career and technical education and how to record information on a student's transcript. (TBA)

APPENDIX D

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Courses that are to be offered above the minimum required Carnegie units and that are not listed in the current edition of *Approved Courses for the Secondary Schools of Mississippi*, as provided for in State Board of Education Policies 2902 and 2903, must meet the criteria outlined in 1.0 through 5.0 below in order to qualify for credit toward graduation. However, in the event that the local school district wishes to implement a course that is nationally or regionally recognized, then the Office of Curriculum and Instruction may approve that course for use in that district for one year by meeting the following conditions:

- the course has a well-defined curriculum, and the local school district wishes to implement the course on a pilot basis;
- the local board of education has approved that implementation for one year; and
- the appropriate Mississippi Department of Education office agrees with the district request.

During that year, appropriate MDE staff will visit the district and review the course implementation. If the course clearly meets the intent of the course development requirements (1.0 through 5.0), then it may be recommended for continued use in the district. If it does not meet the requirements, it will not be approved a second year. However, it may be submitted by the district under the criteria for course approval (1.0 through 5.0).

The required information must be attached to the application. Each required attachment should be marked with the appropriate reference number. Omission of any of this information will cause this application to be returned to the district for revisions and resubmitted prior to the October deadline date in order for the course to be considered.

1.0 Definitions

- 1.1 **Course**—an organized set of competencies and suggested objectives within an academic discipline offered for a period of time (semester or school year) for which a student receives academic credit.
- 1.2 **Developmental Course**—a course designed to be taught in any grade 7-12 (or any combination of grades 7-12 served within a school) that does not appear as an approved course in the current edition of *Approved Courses for the Secondary Schools of Mississippi* published by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction but is in the approval-seeking process as initiated by said school district to be taught in said school district.

2.0 Preliminary Approval Criteria

- 2.1 A district must have the approval of the local school board before submitting a course to the Commission for approval.
- 2.2 Courses must not be alternatives or replacements for any State Board of Education basic course requirements (Appendix B) or graduation requirements (Appendix A) or Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning student admission requirements (Appendix C).
- 2.3 Courses submitted for approval must meet during the teaching day.

3.0 Application/Approval Procedure/Adoption

- 3.1.1 Application for approval of local developmental courses must be made by the third Monday of October.
- 3.1.2 Applications will be reviewed according to preliminary criteria listed in 2.0 and content criteria listed in 4.0.
- 3.1.3 The Office of Curriculum and Instruction will notify districts of the status of the course.
- 3.1.4 Approval for local developmental courses will be a one-year process, commencing with the beginning of the next school year following approval.
- 3.1.5 At the conclusion of the school year, a summative evaluation is required (deadline June 30).

4.0—Application Content

- 4.1—Application for local developmental course approval will be made on forms provided by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. The application will include the following:
- 4.1.1—Course title
 - 4.1.2—Academic discipline(s)
 - 4.1.3—Required teacher licensure
 - 4.1.4—Pre-requisite courses for enrollment
 - 4.1.5—Carnegie unit credit for course
 - 4.1.6—Grade levels to be served
 - 4.1.7—Number of minutes per day/week instruction is to be given
 - 4.1.8—Budget
- 4.2—The instructional management plan for the developmental course will be submitted and must contain the following:
- 4.2.1—Course design—The course design will indicate the content of the course.
 - 4.2.2—Course description—The course description will adhere to the format of the current discipline framework for which the course is being submitted. Failure to do so will result in the application being returned to the district for revisions, and the application must be resubmitted prior to the deadline date. The description will consist of the following:
 - Competencies/Strand objectives
 - Suggested objectives/Content objectives
 - Suggested student and teacher activities
 - Suggested assessment strategies
 - Resources
 - 4.2.3—Course evaluation plan—The evaluation plan will include how the district will determine the success of and need for the course during the pilot period (year one).
- 4.3—A written narrative detailing the following will be submitted:
- 4.3.1—Why the course is being initiated
 - 4.3.2—How the needs assessment was conducted
 - 4.3.2—How many people responded to the needs assessment
- 4.4—Projected expenditure budget for this course for one fiscal year. (Detailed costs should include equipment, supplies, etc.)

5.0—Curriculum Structure Validation

- 5.1—At the end of the pilot year, the school district will submit a final summative evaluation report to the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Curriculum and Instruction, no later than June 30.
- 5.2—Upon receipt of the final evaluation report, the course will be reviewed to determine if it should be recommended for continued use. The following will be considered:
- 5.2.1—Course information appears complete and accurate.
 - 5.2.1.1—Major purpose of course is clearly stated and appropriate.
 - 5.2.1.2—Competencies are indicated and appropriate.
 - 5.2.1.3—Objectives that were added or deleted as a result of evaluation data are indicated.
 - 5.2.2—Course activities are complete
 - 5.2.2.1—Competencies/Strand objectives are defined.
 - 5.2.2.2—Suggested objectives/Content objectives are defined.
 - 5.2.2.3—Suggested student and teacher strategies are appropriate.
 - 5.2.2.4—Suggested assessment strategies are appropriate.
 - 5.2.2.5—Appropriate resources are given.



PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS, 2010

Proposed Process Standard Revisions
Issues/Proposed Resolutions

Approved by the Commission on School Accreditation June 7, 2012

Presented to the State Board of Education
Instructional Enhancement Sub-Committee
April 20, 2012 and May 18, 2012

Standard 4

The school district employs an appropriately licensed full-time principal at each school. {MS Code 37-9-7, 37-9-15, and 37-151-5(g)}

Proposed Language:

The school district employs an appropriately licensed full-time principal at each school. {MS Code 37-9-7, 37-9-15, and 37-151-5(g)}

NOTE: The principal may not have any other job duties assigned in areas that require a specific work area code. This standard does not apply to assistant principals.

Rationale:

The original intent of this standard was for principals to be employed full-time (100%) with no additional job duties. Other job duties such as district/school test coordinator, athletic director, coach, bus driver, etc. do not allow the principal to focus full-time on instructional practices.

Standard 19

The academic year provides a minimum of 180 teaching days in which both teachers and pupils are in regular attendance for scheduled classroom instruction for not less than sixty percent (60%) of the normal school day. {MS Code 37-3-49, 37-13-61 through 69, 37-151-5(j), and 37-151-7(3)(c)}

Mississippi code of 1972
As Amended

SEC. 37-13-61. Date of opening of school term; annual school calendar; length of school term.

The State Board of Education shall have the power and authority to fix the date for the opening of the school term in all schools in the state, and shall promulgate guidelines for an annual school calendar to be observed by all public school districts. Provided, however, that local school boards are authorized to keep school in session in excess of the minimum number of days prescribed herein.

SOURCES: Codes, 1942, Sec. 6274-09, 6411-12; Laws, 1953, Ex Sess, ch. 16, Sec. 9; ch. 23, Sec.12; 1981, ch. 499, Sec 9; 1986, ch. 492, Sec. 85, eff from and after July 1, 1987.

SEC.37-13-63. Minimum length of school term.

(1) All public schools in the state shall be kept in session for at least one hundred eighty (180) days in each scholastic year.

(2) If the school board of any school district shall determine that is not economically feasible or practicable to operate any school within the district for the full one hundred eighty (180) days required for a scholastic year as contemplated due to an enemy attack, a manmade, technological or national disaster in which the Governor has declared a disaster emergency under the laws of this state or the President of the United States has declared an emergency or major disaster to exist in this state, said school board may notify the State Department of Education of such disaster and submit a plan for altering the school term. If the State Department of Education finds such disaster to be the cause of the school not operating for the contemplated school term and that such school was in a school district covered by the Governor's or President's disaster declaration, it may permit said school board to operate the schools in its district for less than one hundred either (180) days.

Proposed Language:

The academic year provides a minimum of 180 teaching days in which both teachers and pupils are in regular attendance for scheduled classroom instruction. {MS Code 37-3-49, 37-13-61 through 69, 37-151-5(j), and 37-151-7(3)(c)}

Rationale:

Many districts with only 180 days in the school calendar release school as early as 10:00 a.m. on the day before Christmas holidays and the last day of school. This is a violation of 37-13-67 because to be considered a school day, there must be a minimum of 5 hours of instruction provided.

Standard 19.3

The school district must ensure that during the academic school year a minimum of 140 hours of instruction is provided for each Carnegie unit of credit offered and 70 hours for each ½ unit offered, except for accelerated learning programs and remedial instructional programs that are proficiency based. A traditional 7-period day schedule must provide at least 48 minutes per period, and A/B and 4 x 4 block schedules must provide at least 94 minutes.

Proposed Language:

The school district must ensure that during the academic school year a minimum of 140 hours of instruction is provided for each Carnegie unit of credit offered and 70 hours for each ½ unit offered, except for remedial instructional programs, dual enrollment/dual credit, correspondence courses, MS Virtual Public School courses, and innovative programs authorized by the State Board of Education.

Add the definition for remedial instructional programs to the glossary of the MS Public School Accountability Standards.

Definition:

Remedial instructional programs: Programs designed to provide interventions and supports for students who have been unsuccessful in mastering content/skills.

Rationale:

Change the language of the standard to provide additional clarity.

Standard 19.4

No more than two of the required 180 days may be 60% days, unless the district is utilizing an Early Release schedule that provides at least 27.5 hours per five-day week provided that there are at least 198 minutes of actual instruction/or testing and the remainder of each 60% day is used for professional development or other activities related to instruction.
 {MS Code 37-151-5(j)}

Mississippi code of 1972
As Amended

SEC. 37-151-5. Definitions.

(j) “Minimum school term” shall mean a term of at least one hundred eighty (180) days of school in which both teachers and pupils are in regular attendance for scheduled classroom instruction for not less than sixty percent (60%) of the normal school day. It is the intent of the Legislature that any tax levies generated to produce additional local funds required by any school district to operate school terms in excess of one hundred seventy-five (175) days shall not be construed to constitute a new program for the purposes of exemption from the limitation on tax revenues as allowed under Sections [37-39-321](#) and [37-57-107](#) for new programs mandated by the Legislature.

Proposed Language:

No more than two of the required 180 days may be 60% days. Both teachers and pupils must be in attendance for not less than 60% of the normal school day.

Many districts utilizing early release schedules do not use the remaining portion of the early release day for professional development or other alternatives related to instruction, but rather as an early release day for everyone.

Standard 20

20. The school district requires each student, in order to receive a high school diploma, to have met the requirements established by its local board of education and by the State Board of Education. {MS Code 37-16-7} (SB Policy 3800)

20.1 Each student receiving a standard high school diploma has earned the minimum number of Carnegie units as specified in Appendix A. (See Appendix A.) (SB Policies 2902 and 2903)

- Seniors of school year 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008 are required to have a minimum of 20 Carnegie units.
- Entering ninth graders in 2005-2006 and thereafter (seniors of school year 2008-2009 and later) are required to have a minimum of 21 Carnegie units.
- Entering ninth graders in 2008-2009 and thereafter (seniors of school year 2011-2012 and later) are required to have a minimum of 24 Carnegie units as specified in Appendix A-2, unless their parent/guardian requests to opt the student out of Appendix A-2 requirements.

20.2 Each student receiving a standard diploma has achieved a passing score on each of the required high school exit examinations. {MS Code-37-16-7} (SB Policy 3800)

20.3 Each student who has completed the secondary curriculum for special education may be issued a special diploma or certificate of completion, which states: "This student has successfully completed an Individualized Education Program." {MS Code 37-16-11(1)}

20.4 The student who fails to meet the graduation requirements is not permitted to participate in the graduation exercises.

20.5 Each student with disabilities receiving a Mississippi Occupational Diploma has successfully completed all minimum requirements established by the State Board of Education. {MS Code 37-16-11(2)} (See Appendix G.)

Note: Carnegie units will be awarded in the eighth grade for the following courses: Algebra I, Pre-algebra, Transition to Algebra, Computer Discovery, Geometry, ICT II (Information & Communication Technology), First Year Foreign Language, and Second Year Foreign Language provided course content is the same as the high school course.

DRAFT

Proposed Language:

20. *The school district requires each student, in order to receive a high school diploma, to have met the requirements established by its local board of education and by the State Board of Education. {MS Code 37-16-7}*
- 20.1 *Each student receiving a standard high school diploma has earned the minimum number of Carnegie units as specified in Appendix A. (See Appendix A.) (SB Policies 2902 and 2903)*
- *Seniors of school year 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008 are required to have a minimum of 20 Carnegie units.*
 - *Entering ninth graders in 2005-2006 and thereafter (seniors of school year 2008-2009 and later) are required to have a minimum of 21 Carnegie units.*
 - *Entering ninth graders in 2008-2009 and thereafter (seniors of school year 2011-2012 and later) are required to have a minimum of 24 Carnegie units as specified in Appendix A-2, unless their parent/guardian requests to opt the student out of Appendix A-2 requirements.*
- 20.2 *Each student receiving a standard diploma has achieved a passing score on each of the required high school exit examinations. {MS Code-37-16-7}*
- 20.3 *Each student who has completed the secondary curriculum for special education may be issued a special diploma or certificate of completion, which states: "This student has successfully completed an Individualized Education Program." {MS Code 37-16-11(1)}*
- 20.4 *The student who fails to meet the graduation requirements is not permitted to participate in the graduation exercises.*
- 20.5 *Each student with disabilities receiving a Mississippi Occupational Diploma has successfully completed all minimum requirements established by the State Board of Education. {MS Code 37-16-11(2)} (See Appendix G.)*

Proposed Language: (cont.)

Note: Carnegie units may be awarded in the seventh grade for the following courses: Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Biology I, ICT II (Information and Communication Technology) and first year Foreign Language provided course content is the same as the high school course.

Note: Carnegie units may be awarded in the eighth grade for the following courses: Pre-Algebra, Transition to Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Biology I, ICT II (Information and Communication Technology), STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Science), first year Foreign Language, and second year Foreign Language provided the course content is the same as the high school course.

Rationale:

Carnegie units are awarded to students only in eighth grade. The MDE is receiving numerous requests to issue Carnegie unit credit to seventh grade students so that students may be introduced to more rigorous curriculum in earlier grades.

From: Martha Liddell [mailto:LiddellM@columbus.k12.ms.us]
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2012 7:35 PM
To: Lynn House
Subject: Public Comment Period - Early Release Wednesday

Dear Dr. House:

It was wonderful getting the opportunity yesterday to participate in the pilot training for the new Principal Evaluation Instrument. Your leadership as our Interim State Superintendent places students at the forefront of all actions regarding public education. I commend you for standing up for children and student achievement.

I wanted to email you this afternoon; because I'm also taking a stand for student achievement in Columbus. Our school is on Academic Watch and our students poverty rate exceed 90%. Yet, I believe each and everyone of our students can achieve at a high level. If you get a few minutes, please review the "Believe and Achieve" Strategic Planning presentation posted at our website: www.columbuscityschools.org

Research informs that student achievement is improved by having a quality teacher in the classroom of can identify and individualize the learning needs of each of his or her students. With the new Common Core State Standards movement, a school district with the poverty level of Columbus must find ways to make exponential gains in student achievement. A step in the right direction won't do-**we have to make leaps.**

Recently, I recommended to the school board a strategy to implement an aggressive job-embedded professional development plan to be primarily delivered through Early Release Wednesdays. My local paper was quick to criticize and remind me that ERW is on the chopping block at MDE due to abuses shared with a journalist from Columbus by Paula Vanderford.

I won't go into the long story about the particular media source, but I will say the editor was a huge fan of my former Superintendent (as I am) and I'm caught in the wrath at the moment. Even so, my focus is and will always be on my students' well being and the needs of educators in Columbus Schools who need a double dose of professional development to break the downward spiral the district's achievement has taken over the past years.

I realize some districts have abused ERW and this couldn't be sadder at a time when it is need for common core implementation depth more than ever; especially in districts with limited resources and skyrocketing student learning needs. When Columbus School District first implemented ERWs some years ago, we were able to move school by school to Level 4 and Level 5 achievement in the old model.

The plan was scrapped by past administration and now our achievement has plummeted to near the bottom of the accountability rung. I know there are many, many factors that impact student achievement, but I was a principal in Columbus during the ERW process. I can tell you from experience that my school couldn't have reached Level 5 status without a job-embedded PD model along with a comprehensive professional development plan that provided systematic plan and opportunity for teachers to receive high quality education as ERW afforded for us. It breaks my heart to see this strategy end for school districts who wouldn't dream of abusing it.

If you don't mind as a Superintendent of a high poverty school district, I would like to submit the following public comment for consideration.

Public Comment:

Early Release Wednesday should not be abused. School districts that have abused this opportunity to provide systematic, job-embedded professional development has harmed the integrity of the process and should be scorned district by district for the abuse by the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE). As the Superintendent of a school

district with a free and reduced lunch rate that exceeds 90%, our students come to school with achievement gaps that are not easily folded in to the basic educational or professional development program.

This is evidenced by the district's state accountability ranking received in 2011 of Academic Watch (D). Although our school district has begun to seriously implement professional learning communities (PLCs) this school year, achievement gaps and growth as measured by the district's student progress monitoring system (MAP & ELS) and state assessments show incremental progress that will place achievement in the district even lower on coming common core state standards assessments.

School districts who need Early Release Wednesdays to train and retool teachers to implement rigor and relevance consistently in their classrooms should have the opportunity to implement the strategy with fidelity. We know from the research that urban and poor school district face a high mobility rates for both teachers and students making a systemic approach to professional development all the more needed.

In my humble opinion, school districts with verified abuses should be forced to suspend their ERWs program by MDE and the State Board of Education until such time they qualify as an ERW second-chance school district at their discretion. I realize some districts have abused ERW and that could be sadder at a time when it's need for common core achievement success more than ever; especially in districts with limited resources and skyrocketing student needs. School districts who are doing the right thing with regard to ERW are putting the effort; because the process is improving student achievement.

My recommendation as a Superintendent of one of the poorer school districts in Mississippi is to allow school districts who need to implement a ERW (as a job-embedded professional development plan) to have that opportunity. I believe school districts should be required by to submit a comprehensive professional development plan if they want to implement an early release strategy that includes who, what, when, where and what and results metrics for MDE to approve annually. By doing this, MDE has a clear picture of which districts are using ERW and monitoring visits can occur on a regular basis as a quality check.

As Superintendent, I also realize that teachers and parents can get to much of a good thing which could make the ERWs process less focused and less effective over time. I do believe their should be a maximum number of ERW days allowed per school year to keep teachers and administrators focused on the purpose of this strategy-- systematic professional development based on student achievement needs identified from multiple data sources. To do anything well, educators must have appropriate engagement time.

If I were writing an ERW professional development plan for next school term in light of what I know now about districts abusing the process (and the potential teacher fatigue), I would schedule 20 ERW systemic professional development days back by a quality plan per school year. This is basically 2 focused professional development days per month (August - May). I realize there is no magic number. However two (2) days per year is far too few considering the uphill journey educators face with effectively implementing common core state standards.

Please don't inspire school districts to reach higher by significantly increasing the rigor in the state's curriculum standards and then tie our hands behind our backs.

Humbly Submitted,
Dr. Martha Liddell, Superintendent of Education
Columbus Municipal School District

From: "Davis, Ilene" <IDavis@poplarville.k12.ms.us>
Date: June 23, 2012 7:13:37 AM CDT
To: "pvanderford@mde.k12.ms.us" <pvanderford@mde.k12.ms.us>
Subject: **Prof. Development each month**

We use the 60 percent day each month for professional development . Please do not do away with these. It is important for my teachers. It is really hard to find time for PD.preparing my teachers helps my students.

Ilene Davis

Roberta Sadler
4340 Ridge Road
Columbus, MS 39705
June 28, 2012

Mississippi Department of Education
Office of Accreditation
359 N. West Street
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205

Ref: Proposed Revisions to the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards

Hello,

The following proposed changes for schools in the state of Mississippi that I am giving feedback/input on as a parent.

Item number 19 and 19.4 should not be changed for many reasons. When you take this administrative time away you are creating a problem for parent and most importantly the students and teachers. You will be implementing School In Service workshop days which will require the parents to have to make full day childcare arrangements, school to add days to make up for the attendance day that the students will miss due to the in service workshops. All of this ends up costing everyone more money for childcare, electricity & water & transportation cost for the extra days. Mississippi is one of the poorest states in our United States why are you purposing to take more money away from all families by changing this Early Release on Wednesdays where I am from?

Here are the pluses/ bonuses to Early Release Days.

1. You provide the administrators of each school & it's teachers time to have workshops, prepare all the paperwork that is required, reports that are required by many teachers that they just don't have time to do in a normal school day. After all they are supposed to be teaching.
2. You give the students a chance to get their routine medical appointment done without missing school.
3. You give the students time to get caught up with their assignments/projects for school.
4. You give the students time for tutoring without having to be taken out of school thus putting them further behind.
5. More importantly you give your Educators time to prepare and plan their assignments.
6. You also afford many of your Educators time to be with their own children/family which makes them better educators.

I am for this program as our teachers deserve this time to have enrichment classes and time to just prepare their lesson plans by making sure they have what the need for them etc. Whether they do a workshop every week or hold afterschool tutoring for their students that are at risk it doesn't matter to me. I know I utilize this time to make all my

kids appoints so that they aren't missing school. If you want to make sure workshops are being held then mandate that x number of them must be held per nine weeks or block. Require that the lesson plan for the workshop to be submitted to the Board of Education. Then randomly attend them unannounced. This works for the military & will work here.

I do not believe in punishing all school districts for the misuse by a few schools. Remove the early release day from those schools that you have adequate proof that they are misusing this program is the correct way to do this.

19. The academic year provides a minimum of 180 teaching days in which both teachers and pupils are in regular attendance for scheduled classroom instruction, ~~for not less than sixty percent (60%) of the normal school day.~~ {MS Code 37-3-49, 37-13-61 through 69, 37-151-5(j), and 37-151-7(3)(c)}

19.1 **DELETED.**

19.2 The teaching day must provide at least 330 minutes of instruction per day or 27.5 hours per five-day week. {MS Code 37-13-67}

19.3 The school district must ensure that during the academic school year a minimum of 140 hours of instruction is provided for each Carnegie unit of credit offered and 70 hours for each ½ unit offered, except for remedial instructional programs, dual enrollment/dual credit, correspondence courses, MS Virtual Public School courses, and innovative programs authorized by the State Board of Education, accelerated learning programs and remedial instructional programs that are proficiency-based. ~~A traditional 7-period day schedule must provide at least 48 minutes per period, and A/B and 4 x 4 block schedules must provide at least 94 minutes.~~

19.4 No more than two of the 180 days may be 60% days. Both teachers and pupils must be in attendance for not less than 60% of the normal school day. ~~unless the district is utilizing an Early Release schedule that provides at least 27.5 hours per five-day week provided that there are at least 198 minutes of actual instruction or testing and the remainder of each 60% day is used for professional development or other activities related to instruction.~~ {MS Code 37-151-5(j)}

19.5 The school district schedules preparation for graduation ceremonies in such manner that graduating seniors are absent from classes for no more than three days prior to the end of the school year. **(Districts Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance are exempted.)**

19.6 The summer school/extended year program meets all applicable requirements of the regular school program. {MS Code 37-3-49}

- Students from other schools enrolled in summer programs provide written approval from the principal of their home schools.
- Students enrolled in an extended year program complete all remaining course/subject requirements/objectives before credit for the course/subject is issued. {MS Code 37-3-49}
- Students enrolled in a summer program are limited to earning one Carnegie unit of credit during a traditional summer school session, which does not apply to Extended Year programs and approved virtual courses. **(Districts Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance may be exempted under MS Code 37-17-11.)**

19.7 Districts utilizing an Early Release Schedule or a Delayed Start School Day Schedule must have the schedules approved by the school board, published and disseminated.

Remedial Instructional Programs: Programs designed to provide interventions and supports for students who have been unsuccessful in mastering content/skills.

Note: Any request for an exception to the above standard must be submitted in writing to the Commission on School Accreditation for review and action.

Note: If the Governor has declared a disaster emergency or the President of the United States has declared an emergency or major disaster to exist in this state, the local school board may request approval from the State Board of Education to operate the schools in its district for less than one hundred eighty (180) days. {MS Code 37-151-7(3)(d)}

*I have problems with the following paragraphs I have marked with **. The word "may" is a very poor choice. It should be worded "WILL BE awarded period". The reason for this is that you have some counselors that interpret the "may" as "we don't have to give credit for these classes from the middle school" and are forcing kids to take classes over that are exactly the same from the middle school thus making students risk running short on credits if they struggle in one of the core classes & have to retake. As a parent, I think a Phase 2 of more in-depth Career Discovery course should be required and taught at the 9 & 10 grade level this would better prepare them as they are at the more mature age & level that they need to decide which way they are going. I also feel every student should be required to take a personal finance class at 9 or 10 grades. This prepares them with a life skill that they need that many aren't taught at home.*

****Note: Carnegie units may be awarded in the seventh grade for the following courses: Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Biology I, ICT II (Information and Communication Technology) and first year Foreign Language provided course content is the same as the high school course.**

****Note: Carnegie units may will be awarded in the eighth grade for the following courses: Pre-Algebra, Transition to Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Biology I, Computer Discovery, ICT II (Information & Communication Technology), STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Science), first year Foreign Language, and second year Foreign Language provided course content is the same as the high school course.**

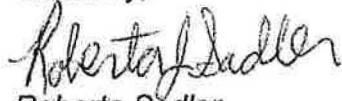
I would like to see the State Department of Education mandate a separate Lunch period for all Middle and High Schools. The current 15-20 minutes to get to the cafeteria get your food & eat is not healthy. Many students choose not to eat as they don't want to be late to class and risk an in school suspension for being tardy 4 times (this is an absurd policy). Do you not get a required lunch hour with your contract? Yes you do and students should be given a full 45-50 minutes for lunch each day. I know that the discipline problems and kids getting sick at what is supposed to be their lunch time will go down if they have time to eat. Kids do not function when they are hungry.

If you want Mississippi to be in the top of the Education ratings you have got to start improving the basics like time to eat and time to teach something beside the MCT and MCT2 and get away from this Accelerated Reading program being a require participation and percentage of their grade at the middle school level. Reading is supposed to be fun and this program has really made kids hate reading and isn't fair to those that are slow readers but on grade level. I suggest doing a survey of all your students, parents and teachers asking if this program is not the biggest source of family relationship and teacher student problems with homework. The state of North Carolina in the Fayetteville Schools it is an optional program with prizes to be won. This incentive then has kids

wanting to read to try & win that prize while reading books. The real world is not about those tests. Education needs to get back to real teaching of real life skills Math, English, Writing & Reading, Communication and some Life Survival skills like cooking, sewing, woodshop, auto mechanics and music (band & choir) all need to be brought back to all schools.

Thank you for allowing me to give my feedback on the proposed changes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roberta Sadler".

Roberta Sadler

Concerned Parent

Dear MDE,

As a resident of Lowndes County, MS, I have seen first hand the positive effects of Early Release Wednesdays on student achievement. Since the Lowndes County School District implemented a comprehensive professional development plan for Wednesday afternoons, student achievement has continued to steadily increase. Teachers, administrators, and parents credit this increase in student achievement directly to the focused professional development that teachers undergo each Wednesday throughout the school year. Without this time, the district would not be fully implementing the CCSS to the level of success they currently enjoy.

While I understand that some districts may not be using this time effectively, it is poor leadership to punish all for the fault of a few. If there are districts violating this, they should be handled individually. At the very minimum, districts that have a multi-year history of successful Wednesday PD should NOT be required to give up that time.

Sincerely,

Kate M. Brown
Director, Center for Creative Learning
Mississippi University for Women
1100 College Street, MUW-1635
Columbus, MS 39701
(662) 329-7676
www.muw.edu/cc

I realize that some districts may not use early release days wisely, but stopping early release for the districts who do use the time for professional growth seems unfair. Schools have used this time to learn CCSS, develop lessons, learn new strategies and perfect skills. Please reconsider this.

Debbie Fancher
dbfancher@bellsouth.net