

OFFICE OF STATE SUPERINTENDENT
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
Consent Agenda
June 19-20, 2014

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATION AND LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

G. Approval of grant awards for special projects appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature, House Bill 1476 (subject to the availability of funds)

Purpose: The Mississippi Legislature appropriated funds for special projects as identified in House Bill 1476. The Mississippi Department of Education is directed to transfer the designated amounts to the appropriate entities, which shall assume full responsibility for the expenditure of these funds in accordance with state laws and accept all responsibility for any improper expenditure. This requirement will be included in the grant agreements for the entities receiving funds under House Bill 1476.

- Grant Period: July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015
- Total Amount to be Awarded: \$ 24,558,953
- Basis for Awarding the Grant: Legislative Mandate

Funding Source: State General, (House Bill 1476) and Health Care Expendable Fund

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

**Special Projects Appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature
Fiscal Year 2015**

Entities appropriated funding in HB 1476:

Detention Centers	\$1,000,000
Digital Interactive Learning	\$2,200,000
Drop-out Prevention at Star Academy	\$ 500,000
DuBard School	\$ 500,000
Dyslexia Program	\$ 300,000
IHL-Alternative Route Certification Program	\$ 40,400
Jobs for MS Graduates	\$1,000,000
K12 Company School	\$ 100,000
Learning through Sports/Kids College	\$ 885,000
Life Tracks (SLDS)	\$1,800,000
Magee Enterprise Learning Lab	\$ 250,000
Magnolia Speech School	\$ 542,541
Meridian Symphony Orchestra	\$ 37,500
Mississippi Arts Commission-Arts Institute	\$ 40,000
Mississippi Autism	\$ 200,000
Mississippi Building Blocks	\$3,000,000
Mississippi Symphony Orchestra	\$ 50,000
MSU Riley Center	\$ 75,000
New Learning Resources, Inc.	\$ 250,000
Okolona School District – BabySteps Pre-K Program	\$ 40,000
Performance Based Compensation Pilot Programs	\$1,500,000
Principal Corps	\$ 550,000
SafeHeart Health Screens Program	\$ 150,000
Save the Children Program	\$ 750,000
Sight Savers of Alabama, Inc.	\$ 526,472
Teach for America	\$6,000,000
Teacher Corps	\$ 185,000
Tupelo Symphony Orchestra	\$ 37,500
University of Southern Mississippi – Autism Project	\$ 50,000
University of Southern Mississippi – Preschool Language Program	\$ 692,540
Very Special Arts of Mississippi	\$ 40,000
Vision Research Corporation – Vision Screening Program	\$ 350,000
Weight Watchers Program	\$ 300,000
*World Class Teacher Program	\$ 500,000
World Class Teacher Program – Alcorn State University	<u>\$ 117,000</u>

Total Grant Awards for Special Projects **\$24,558,953**

*University allotments are based on number of National Board Candidates served.

Special Projects Appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature House Bill 1476 Fiscal Year 2015

Detention Centers (State Funds)

Detainees of the 17 detention centers in the State are required to receive educational services by a certified teacher in the sponsoring school district selected by youth court judges. The educational services may be contracted with a private provider if approved by the judge and sponsoring school district. Services include computer-based diagnostic assessment and math and reading instruction, character evaluation, and behavioral counseling. The funds will be used to equip each of the 17 detention centers with a full-time teacher and computer lab complete with software, hardware and furniture for rendering the required educational services.

Digital Interactive Learning (State Funds)

This is a pilot project to determine the digital readiness in school districts. Schools located within the Booneville and Hattiesburg School Districts will receive grants for the second year. Additional districts will receive grants based upon a competitive application process.

Drop-out Prevention at Star Academy (State Funds)

The award-winning Star Academy Program is a school-within-a-school that ensures success for at-risk students and disengaged learners. This comprehensive dropout prevention program is designed to meet the needs of the district. The district can select up to seven courses from an offering of core courses in science, math, English, and social studies and elective courses in practical arts, life skills, technology, and health. Flexible in its design, the unique academic implementation effectively reengages students through a rigorous progression of instruction that incorporates hands-on learning, individualized instruction, cooperative learning, team-based instruction, and real-world career connections. In addition, the program provides a safe and healthy school climate. Students achieve academic success, develop leadership and communication skills, and ultimately experience a positive change in attitude toward themselves and their future. The expected outcomes of participating in a Star Academy Program are accelerating up to two grade levels in one school year, improving attendance habits, and improving behavior. Each program can serve up to 80 students per year.

DuBard School (State Funds)

The mission of the DuBard School for Language Disorders at The University of Southern Mississippi is to bring the gift of oral and written language to individuals with communication disorders and reading disabilities, including dyslexia, through direct clinical services and professional training. Each year the school serves 80 children full time in its 11-month program. On average, the students have 4.9 diagnoses. The children come from approximately 20 school districts into 15 counties each year. The typical service area reaches from Magee to the Gulf Coast, Greene County to Pike County. Intensive speech-language therapy is incorporated into the students' full-day multisensory instructional program. In addition to direct services to children, the DuBard School is a practicum site for university students. Professional development is provided through intensive courses, workshops, and conferences held at Southern Miss and around the state.

Dyslexia Program (State Funds)

Funds will be provided to the Mississippi Department of Education for disbursement to schools that apply through an RFP process on a yearly basis for funds to implement local dyslexia assessment and remediation programs. Approximately of 18 schools have been awarded grants per year since the implementation of the program in 1997. The Dyslexia pilot program provides for certain students enrolled or enrolling in public schools to be tested for dyslexia and related disorders based on a request from a parent, student, school nurse, classroom teacher, or other personnel. School districts provide remediation in an appropriate multi-sensory, systemic language-based dyslexia program or programs as determined by the district, such as the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital Dyslexia Training Program, for children not qualified to be served in special education services.

IHL-Alternate Route Certification (State Funds)

The IHL will implement the Teach Mississippi Institute. The Institute is an intensive eight-week, nine-semester hour summer institute which includes instruction in education, effective teaching strategies, classroom management, state curriculum requirements, planning and instruction, instructional methods and pedagogy and use of test results to improve instruction.

Jobs for Mississippi Graduates (State Funds)

Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, Inc., is an affiliate of the national non-profit public service corporation, which assists at-risk and disadvantaged youth in graduating from high school, as well as improving their rate of success in acquiring employability and occupational-specific competencies before leaving high school and/or pursuing post-secondary education. The program offers a unique combination of in-school and out-of-school services, such as tutoring, remediation, employability skills curriculum, job development and placement, and post-graduation follow-up. The funds will be used for salaries, travel, equipment and office expenses.

K12 Company School (State Funds)

K12 Company is a “virtual” public school company that offers online educational programs for children in kindergarten through 12th grade. In Mississippi, the funds appropriated by the Legislature will enable pilot programs which will use technology-based theory to turn around underperforming schools. The program will be instituted in three schools.

Learning Through Sports/Kids College (State Funds)

Learning Through Sports/Kids College will provide qualifying elementary and middle schools with a data-driven, diagnostic, adaptive and prescriptive teaching tool and will implement programs that address drop-out prevention and character education. Learning through Sports is a leading educational publisher of digital game-based learning programs for K-12. Star sportsmanship will provide every 7th through 12th grade student-athlete, coach, and official participating in MHSAA-sanctioned activities in the State of Mississippi access to a web-based sports related, character-building program.

Life Tracks (SLDS) (State Funds)

LifeTracks is a statewide project that began in 2009 with a grant from the U.S. Dept. of Education to develop, implement, and expand a state longitudinal data system (SLDS) to link information from pre-K through the workforce to create better information for decision

making to improve student outcomes. It is designed to align the efforts of universities, community colleges, K-12 schools, and early childhood education in terms of academic standards and career expectations with the general intent of: (1) decreasing the number of high school dropouts; (2) increasing the number of high school students who graduate and enroll in and successfully complete a two- or four-year college degree; (3) increasing the number of students who successfully transfer from community colleges to universities; (4) increasing the number of four-year college graduates; (5) improving career-readiness at all levels of education; and (6) increasing the number of students who successfully gain employment.

Magee Enterprise Learning Lab (State Funds)

The Magee Enterprise Learning Lab is an interdisciplinary center of application that is a hands-on, student-centered, project-based learning environment. All students, from gifted to special needs, can utilize lab for projects that reinforce and enhance retention of academic theories learned in the traditional classroom, in all K-12 courses taught.

Magnolia Speech School (State Funds)

Magnolia Speech School, located in Jackson, is a unique auditory oral program for Mississippi's children with hearing loss and language disorders. With small classrooms, specialized staff and a life-changing curriculum, the school helps children reach their potential in the area of spoken language and to mainstream most of these students back into their local school, equipped to understand when spoken to, to speak and be understood, and to read and learn in a regular academic setting. Parents pay minimal tuition on a sliding scale according to income. With 35% of the students enrolled from low-income households, Magnolia Speech School provides over one million dollars annually in financial assistance to families throughout Mississippi. The allocated funds from the State will be used to provide a portion of this financial aid.

Meridian Symphony Orchestra (State Funds)

For over five decades, the Meridian Symphony Orchestra (MSO) has been a focal point of arts and culture in East Mississippi. Throughout its distinguished history, the MSO has maintained a tradition of producing great classical music concerts featuring the works of the master composers of the past and present as well as wonderful family programs like the annual Peppermint Pop's - a favorite for hundreds of concertgoers. The MSO also provides an array of educational opportunities for students through their MSO Backstage program, Community Outreach and School and Riley Center Visits.

Mississippi Arts Commission-Arts Institute (State Funds)

The Mississippi Arts Institute provides training for teams from schools throughout Mississippi on how to use the arts to enhance learning and teaching. This project provides sequential, comprehensive arts education for each student in school. It involves the creation of an arts-based interdisciplinary curricula and regular instruction by certified music, dance, drama and visual art specialists. In addition, arts specialists meet regularly with classroom teachers to enhance the regular instruction by using the arts as a bridge to learning other subject material. This project provides diverse educational strategies such as verbal, kinesthetic, visual, musical, analytical and emotional, which will allow

participants to experience the scope and variety of ways in which we learn, involving the whole person: head, heart and hands.

Mississippi Autism (State Funds)

The Mississippi Autism Center works with children with autism from early childhood and utilizes proven based programs/curricula in preparing them for successful school experiences. Funding will be used for early identification of children with autism, giving them an opportunity for success in the school environment.

Mississippi Building Blocks (State Funds)

Mississippi Building Blocks (MBB) started in 2008. MBB is a private-sector funded pilot program designed to assist existing childcare centers in making improvements to their programs by improving teaching and learning in licensed child care centers; strengthening parenting skills; and improving school-readiness among entering kindergartners.

Mississippi Symphony Orchestra (State Funds)

House Bill 706, which created the Mississippi School of the Arts (MSA), authorized the State Board of Education to enter into agreements with the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra and other professional organizations for instruction and educational services at MSA and other public schools. The program provides instruction on music appreciation and theory, music history, and music performance in school districts that are unable to provide music education through local resources. The funds will be used for musicians, salaries, travel and materials.

MSU Riley Center (State Funds)

The MSU Riley Center for Education & Performing Arts is committed to entertain and enrich, further lifelong learning, and improve the quality of life for people of Mississippi and West Alabama through education and the arts, while enhancing the reputation and offerings of Mississippi State University. It is able to facilitate personal and professional growth and social interaction within the community while serving as a catalyst for community growth and economic development. The MSU Riley Center regularly provides educational and performing arts events designed to entertain and enrich people of all ages, backgrounds, and interests. The Center has become known as the premier place to experience the arts, attend meetings and conferences, and host social events in the Southeast. It serves as an outreach and recruitment tool on a statewide and national level for the university, reaching and positively impacting current and prospective college students, faculty and staff, donors, and national, statewide, and local community leaders, policy makers, and lawmakers.

New Learning Resources, Inc. (State Funds)

New Learning Resources, Inc. is comprised of the following organizations: New Summit School, North New Summit School, New Summit Academy (Costa Rica), New Learning Resources Online, and the Mississippi Community Education Center. New Learning Resources School District employs competent administrators, teachers and support staff to provide students with quality educational opportunities. An ongoing staff development program keeps staff members current on educational trends, teaching strategies and practices needed to provide meaningful educational opportunities for students.

Okolona School District—BabySteps Pre-K Program (State Funds)

BabySteps' founder, Okolona native and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, William Raspberry, created BabySteps with the mission to transform the homes of families in the Okolona community into learning environments. Through community collaboration BabySteps is able to provide comprehensive program services that meet the educational, emotional and health needs of all children. BabySteps offers free support services to parents, pre-school aged children and their siblings up to eight years of age. Parents (and a growing number of grandparents who find themselves the primary caregivers) participate in bi-weekly parenting classes, open their doors to home educators twice a month, and bring their children to weekly educational and cultural enrichment sessions. Most of the children also receive quality early learning experiences from local childcare centers that partner with BabySteps.

Highlights

- BabySteps has contracted a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) specialist to prepare and support partnering childcare centers to achieve 3 Star rating.
- BabySteps provides Pre-School Learning Assessments and provides interventions services for all Pre-K students in partnering childcare centers.
- BabySteps assesses the social and emotional health of 3 and 4 year-old boys through our special Boys Early Success Team (B.E.S.T.) program to support positive behavior.
- BabySteps provides a book checkout at Okolona Elementary School for kindergarten and 1st grade students to increase availability of books and reading in the home.

Performance Based Compensation Pilot Program (State Funds)

In an effort to develop a system to pay teachers based on performance, the Governor through the Mississippi Education Works Bill authorizes the Rankin County School District, Clarksdale School District, Lamar County School District and the Gulfport School District to participate in a pilot program to develop merit pay programs and report back to the legislature.

Principal Corps (State Funds)

The Principal Corps in the School of Education at the University of Mississippi, modeled after the Mississippi Teacher Corps, will be a scholarship program designed to recruit the brightest and most talented candidates to complete specialized principal training. The program will include instruction for two full summers and one academic year of graduate work and will pay the tuition, accommodations and per diem for first-year principals accepted into the program. The program will utilize leading authorities in the country and the Barksdale Reading Institute to design the principal-training curriculum with an emphasis on literacy instruction, and will serve as a model for other universities.

SafeHeart Health Screens Program (State Funds)

This project is for a worksite wellness initiative and provides \$150,000 for SafeHeart Health Screens to screen employees of the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) as well as teachers and employees of the local school districts. Approximately 1,150 employees will participate in this project.

SafeHeart Health Screens offers affordable, high-quality, fast and painless cardiovascular disease screening tests that assess for risk of heart attack, stroke and aneurysm. This information can be life-saving and prevent catastrophic events from happening due to early detection. All five screens are non-invasive, require no disrobing, and are painless. SafeHeart Health Screens has developed a unique screening procedure that enables participants to have all five screens done in one location and in less than 15 minutes.

SafeHeart Health Screens will supply all equipment and personnel to perform the following five screens:

- Carotid Artery Ultrasound Screen
- Carotid Intima Media Thickness Ultrasound Screen
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Ultrasound Screen
- Atrial Fibrillation Screen
- Peripheral Artery Disease Screen

Save the Children Program (State Funds)

Save the Children is an independent organization geared toward creating opportunities for children to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives. Founded by a group of business people in 1932, the organization began with a hot lunch program for undernourished students in Harlan County, KY. In the 1940s, during World War II, Save the Children expanded operations overseas. In Mississippi, the group has recently been instrumental in helping to restore child care services in areas that were impacted by Hurricane Katrina. A grant the organization received in 2007 allowed for two new child care facilities in Hancock and Harrison counties.

Sight Savers of Alabama, Inc. (State Funds) (Combined with Vision Screening)

Sight Savers of Alabama, Inc. performs the service of following up with children after the initial vision-screening to coordinate both the scheduling and transportation for eye exams, eyeglasses, medication, vision training, surgery, and vision aids. Sight Savers also recruits a network of eye care professionals to treat children, including a volunteer network of doctors and opticians. Treatment is provided free of charge to children who cannot afford the services. Essentially, Sight Savers works to ensure that children get the treatment they need to correct vision problems that are found after mandatory vision screening.

Teach for America (State Funds)

Teach for America recruits and places bright college graduates in teaching positions for two years in Mississippi's critical teacher shortage areas. Corp members must have a bachelor's degree, pass the PRAXIS I & II, and have U. S. citizenship. In addition, Corp members must pass background checks and attend summer training prior to entering the classroom. Ongoing meetings and discussions among the Teach for America teachers,

district administrators, district teachers, and Teach for America personnel build a comprehensive support network for each Corp member.

Teacher Corps (State Funds)

The Teacher Corps is a two-year program, similar to the Peace Corps that recruits college graduates to teach in Mississippi schools, primarily in the Mississippi Delta and in Jackson. The program is designed for non-education majors and provides them with teacher training and certification, a full scholarship for a master's degree in education from the University of Mississippi and job placement. The program provides dedicated, talented teachers for critical-needs school districts in Mississippi, affords a structured entry into the teaching profession for outstanding liberal arts graduates who have not taught before and identifies and nurtures educational leaders.

Tupelo Symphony Orchestra (State Funds)

For 25 years, the Tupelo Symphony Orchestra (TSO) has been a focal point of arts and culture in North Mississippi. Throughout its distinguished history, the TSO has maintained a tradition of producing great concerts and educational programs for students. With a focus on grades 3 through 6, the TSO has recently partnered with the Carnegie Linkup Program and the Mississippi Arts Commission to provide an array of educational opportunities for students.

University of Southern Mississippi – Autism Project (State Funds)

The University of Southern Mississippi Autism Project conducts various activities that enable the project's staff to accomplish their mission, which is to train school personnel and parents about the design and operation of appropriate school-based programs for students with autism. These activities include (a) leading various statewide trainings (e.g., statewide and regional large-group trainings and webinars) and (b) operating an Autism Demonstration School. To date, Autism Project staff has presented 175 trainings to more than 2,400 personnel. The Autism Demonstration School, which is housed within the Long Beach School District at its Middle School, provides direct services to 28 students with autism, ages 3-9, across four classrooms. The school serves as a facility in which school personnel can participate in hands-on training experiences while working with students with autism.

University of Southern Mississippi – Preschool Language Program (State Funds)

The Children's Center for Communication and Development, located at the University of Southern Mississippi, assists school districts in providing special education services to children with communication and developmental delays from birth through five years of age. The Center is comprised of an interdisciplinary team, which develops curriculum modules and training materials for statewide use, establishes on-site observation and provides intervention services. The funds will be used for salaries, travel, consultants and office expenses related to the training, modeling and replication of the program in the public schools.

Very Special Arts Program (State Funds)

The Very Special Arts Program (VSA) is a statewide volunteer-based non-profit organization dedicated to the development, promotion, coordination and implementation of quality accessible arts programs in dance, music, drama, creative writing, visual and media arts for people of all ages and disabilities. VSA, in partnership with Northwest Mississippi Community College, has offered Start with the Arts, Mosaic Design and Paper Making for teachers in North Mississippi. VSA has also worked in partnership with JPS to offer professional development for teachers in Mosaic Design and Paper Making for children with disabilities.

Vision Research Corporation – Vision Screening Program (State and Tobacco Funds)

The 1996 Legislature appropriated \$50,000 to establish a pilot student vision-screening program to make eye-screening services available to students in the public schools. The purpose of this program was to detect vision problems, which can lead to academic problems. The Vision Research Corporation of Birmingham, Alabama conducted the Mississippi Eye Screening Program during FY 1997, using an advanced screening system originally developed by NASA. Over 8,330 students were screened during the 1996-1997 school year. Since its inception, the pilot program has grown to a statewide effort with approximately 40,000 students screened this past year.

Sight Savers of Alabama, Inc. performs the service of following up with children after the initial vision-screening to coordinate both the scheduling and transportation for eye exams, eyeglasses, medication, vision training, surgery, and vision aids. Sight Savers also recruits a network of eye care professionals to treat children, including a volunteer network of doctors and opticians. Treatment is provided free of charge to children who cannot afford the services. Essentially, Sight Savers works to ensure that children get the treatment they need to correct vision problems that are found after mandatory visitors screening.

Weight Watchers Program (State Funds)

Weight Watchers will offer grants for a Weight Watchers Program to Mississippi school Districts for its teachers and employees. The grant provides for participants to join a fifteen week Weight Watchers session for \$150. The appropriation requires that the participant absorbs 40% (\$60) of the cost and the grant will cover 60% (\$90) of the cost.

World Class Teacher Program (State Funds)

The World Class Teacher Program is a program designed to assist teachers in gaining National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. The program was originally operated by Mississippi State University, and the 1998 Legislature increased the sites by adding programs at the University of Southern Mississippi and The University of Mississippi. The 1999 Legislature expanded the program to include sites at Delta State University and Jackson State University. The funds will be used for salaries, travel, office expenses and consultants to support the World Class Teacher Program at these universities.

World Class Teacher Program – Alcorn State University (State Funds)

The Mississippi World Class Teaching Program (WCTP) was established by legislation in 1996 to help recruit and mentor candidates through the National Board Certification process. There are currently five WCTP sites located at Delta State University, Jackson State University, Mississippi State University, the University of Southern Mississippi and the University of Mississippi. The legislature appropriates funds for these sites annually and during the 2014 Legislative Session funding for another site at Alcorn State University was approved. The WCTP sites offer support groups, one-on-one training and workshops where teachers can discuss details of their application and receive feedback and critiques. The WCTP also conducts information and recruiting sessions for local school districts as well as NBCT standards studies.

Last year, the WCTP sites received funding from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to help expand their services and offer mentoring to pre-service and early career teachers. This work will allow teachers to increase their instructional capacity and prepare for certification with the aim of increasing positive outcomes for students.