

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
August 27, 2020

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT

01. Action: Approval by the SBE to allow specific school districts to operate for less than 180 days as required in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-63 following Governor Tate Reeves' Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts during the 2020 – 2021 school year in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1) [Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

Background Information: On March 13, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak, President Donald Trump declared a national emergency. In addition, on March 14, 2020, Governor Tate Reeves issued a Declaration of a State of Emergency for the state of Mississippi. Included in his Proclamation, Governor Reeves directed that pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(c), the provisions of state statutes, rules, regulation and/or orders may be temporarily suspended or modified if compliance with such provisions would prevent, hinder, or delay action to cope with the outbreak. Furthermore, on March 19, 2020, Governor Reeves issued Executive Order 1460, and on April 22, 2020, Governor Reeves issued Executive Order 1476, which in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1), authorizes and empowers the State Board of Education (SBE) to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statutes, and to make, amend, rescind such orders, rules and regulations that it deems necessary to assist Mississippi public schools to cope with the COVID-19 emergency.

As a result of the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and a result of Governor Reeves' Executive Order 1517 on August 4, 2020, delaying the start of schools in eight (8) counties (Bolivar, Coahoma, Forrest, George, Hinds, Panola, Sunflower and Washington), the SBE held a special-called meeting on August 6, 2020, and approved a waiver of up to ten (10) school days in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-63(2) for the 2020 – 2021 school year for school districts named in the Executive Order and districts that delayed their established and previously published start dates as a result of COVID-19. The decision to reduce the school calendar by up to ten (10) days is a local district decision, not a requirement of the impacted districts. The waiver approved by the SBE on August 6, 2020 does not allow districts to maintain their original start date and reduce the number of school days later in the school year.

Due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, the SBE will consider approval of one (1) of the following options:

- 1) Provide the ten (10) day waiver to all local school districts; or
- 2) Provide the ten (10) day waiver to districts on a case-by-case basis.

This item references Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the *Mississippi Board of Education 2018-2022 Strategic Plan*.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material: None