

What Every

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER



NEEDS TO KNOW

SEPTEMBER 2020



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION GOALS

1

ALL STUDENTS PROFICIENT AND SHOWING GROWTH IN ALL ASSESSED AREAS

2

EVERY STUDENT GRADUATES FROM HIGH SCHOOL AND IS READY FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER

3

EVERY CHILD HAS ACCESS TO A HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

4

EVERY SCHOOL HAS EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND LEADERS

5

EVERY COMMUNITY IS EFFECTIVELY USING A WORLD-CLASS DATA SYSTEM TO IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

6

EVERY SCHOOL AND DISTRICT IS RATED "C" OR HIGHER

Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent

Dr. Washington Cole, *Chief of Staff*

Jean Gordon Cook, APR, *Director of Public Relations*

Dr. Felicia Gavin, *Chief Operations Officer*

Joe Goff, *Chief of Advocacy and Counsel*

Patrice Guilfoyle, APR, *Communications Director*

John Kraman, *Chief Information Officer*

Dr. Nathan Oakley, *Chief Academic Officer*

Pete Smith, *Chief Communications and Government Relations Officer*

Dr. Paula Vanderford, *Chief Accountability Officer*

**For questions or additional information about this publication,
please contact Dr. Marla Davis, State Director of Curriculum & Instruction, at
mdavis@mdek12.org.**

The Mississippi State Board of Education, the Mississippi Department of Education, the Mississippi School for the Arts, the Mississippi School for the Blind, the Mississippi School for the Deaf, and the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits. The following office has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies of the above-mentioned entities:

Director, Office of Human Resources

Mississippi Department of Education

359 North West Street

Jackson, Mississippi 39201

(601) 359-3511

Publication Overview

Chief Academic Officer

Dr. Nathan Oakley



In an effort to keep instructional leaders informed, the Mississippi Department of Education, through the Office of Academic Education, would like to provide this broad overview of various program offices within the agency, along with their contact information and key initiatives. It is our hope that you will find this document useful as you continue to serve students in our great state.

Table of Contents

❖ Program Office Updates

• Academic School Counseling & Support Services	5
• Accreditation	8
• Career & Technical Education	9
• Child Nutrition	10
• Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement	12
• Curriculum & Instruction	14
• District and School Performance	18
• Early Childhood	19
• Educator Effectiveness	22
• Educator Licensure	23
• Educator Preparation	25
• Educator Talent Acquisition	26
• Elementary Education & Reading	27
• Federal Programs	29
• Healthy Schools	32
• Intervention Services	34
• JROTC	37
• Literacy	39
• Professional Development & Innovative Programs	41
• School Improvement	44
• Special Education	47
• Student Assessment	52
• Technology & Strategic Services	54

❖ Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)	57
❖ Current News Releases	58

Academic School Counseling & Support Services

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3461

Wendy Clemons

Executive Director

wclemons@mdek12.org

Chandrea Walker

**Director of CTE Counseling and
Student Services**

cswalker@mdek12.org

vacant

Director of K-12 Academic Counseling

Kathy Mangum

Counseling Program Supervisor

klmangum@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Early College High Schools, Middle College Programs, and Career Academies
- Approved Courses for Secondary Schools
- Innovation Lab Network
- Get2College Initiative
- Comprehensive Counselor Programs
- Social/Emotional Development Programs
- Suicide and Bullying Prevention

What you need to know...

- **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)** – The MDE has released the [K-12 SEL Competencies](#) for local level use. The overarching purpose of these standards is to address the social and emotional needs of all students to ensure their success in school and in life. SEL skills improve a student's capacity to engage in academic learning and prepares them to meet the college and career readiness standards (CCRS). They further assist school staff with their respective roles in integrating social emotional learning into daily classroom and school experiences of students.
- **Suicide and Bullying Prevention** – Per House Bill 263, districts will develop anti-bullying policies and provide in-service training for suicide prevention. Detailed legislation, proper procedures, guiding resources and approved training curriculum have been provided to districts at <https://www.mdek12.org/ESE/secondary-education/suicide-bullying-prevention>.
- **Individual Success Plan** – Process Standard 14.1.4: The Individual Success Plan (ISP) is a personalized plan for all students in grades 7-12. School districts, using this document as a resource, should select activities to guide students in exploring strengths and interests, connect strengths and interests to a career pathway, and set career and academic goals based on a chosen pathway.
- **MS Career Resource Guidance Document** – Guidance document to districts on creating a “college-going culture” and preparing students to make postsecondary

decisions. This document includes the ISP and other designated activities at grade levels 6-12. This includes an appendix of materials related to academic success. Visit <https://www.mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS> to view these resources.

- **MS Career Guidance Standards: K-5 & 6-12** – Online guidance documents that include objectives, lessons, and resources for all grades with an emphasis on career exploration and awareness for grades K-5 and educational and career planning for grades 6-12. Visit <https://www.mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS> to view these resources.
- **Career Development Education** – Is a lifelong process by which an individual defines and refines life and work roles. Career development education includes awareness of individual interests, skills, attitudes, talents and abilities, particularly as they change and develop during the educational experience. The process of educating students about career development provides the context in which students explore a variety of educational and occupational opportunities, learn the realities of the workplace, and identify both the technical skills and individual qualities they will need for success in the modern economy.
- **Academic Counseling** – The School Counselors’ framework, developed by the MDE, is aligned with the American School Counselors National Model. School counselors have a tremendous responsibility in addressing the personal/social, academic, and career needs of every Mississippi student in prekindergarten through grade 12 and career and technical education. Academic and personal/social counseling use multiple student data sources to help students with the following: make informed academic and career choices; career and educational counseling; individual and group counseling (large/small); crisis intervention and preventive counseling; community resources awareness and referrals; educational consultations and collaboration with teachers, administrators, parents and community leaders; educational and career placement services; follow-up counseling services; and conflict resolution.
- **Counseling Education (CTE) Counseling** – Career and technical counselors’ work responsibilities impact students directly with career and personal development training curricula. Indirect involvement includes considerable efforts by counselors to provide enhanced experiential opportunities to fine-tune workplace skills through collaborations and partnerships with local area businesses and business leaders. Career and technical counselors collaborate with instructors, academic counselors, Student Services staff, and other professional staff to provide a seamless integration of academic, career and technical and personal skills resources. They work closely with Special Education teachers and the academic counselors to maximize students’ academic achievement.
- **Special Populations (Student Services)** – The purpose of instructional services rendered by Special Populations personnel is to enable special population students to experience success in their chosen career and technical education programs. Student Services Coordinators may provide instruction for the disadvantaged career and technical student in areas including mathematics, reading, and writing in addition to any assistance needed in their career and technical classes. The instruction is coordinated with the career and technical instructor and services are delivered concurrently with enrollment in a career and technical education program.

- **Early College High School** – An ECHS is a small, independent high school that is usually located on a partnering college campus or a location other than a traditional high school campus. The goal of an early college high school is for students to graduate with both a high school diploma and an Associate degree from the partnering college.
 - **Middle College Program** – A Middle College Program is a robust enrollment program run by a school district and a partnering college that offers high school students a large choice of dual credit and dual enrollment classes. The students may spend a portion of the academic day at the high school and a portion of the day at the partnering community college, where the classes are taught. These programs are often set up in a cohort model.
 - **Career Academy** – A Career Academy is a small learning community, comprised of a group of students within the larger high school who take classes together for at least two years –taught by a team of teachers from different disciplines focused on a career pathway. The Academy delivers a college-preparatory curriculum with a career theme, enabling students to see relationships among academic subjects and their applications to a broad field of work. Partnerships with employers, the community, and local colleges, are key elements to a successful career academy bringing resources from outside the high school to improve student motivation and achievement.
 - **Early Warning System** – This guide provides information on how to effectively use early warning data to identify, support, and monitor at-risk students in grades K-12. Visit <https://www.mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS> to view this resource.
-

Accreditation

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3764

Dr. Jo Ann Malone
Executive Director
jmalone@mdek12.org

Melissa Biggs
Staff Officer III
mbiggs@mdek12.org

Chris Haynes
Staff Officer III
chaynes@mdek12.org

Shulawnda Johnson
Staff Officer III
sjohnson@mdek12.org

Angela Kitchens
Staff Officer III
akitchens@mdek12.org

Angelo Nuzzo
Branch Director II
anuzzo@mdek12.org

Ken Stamps
Staff Officer III
kstamps@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Administer the state's performance-based accreditation system for public schools and the accreditation system for nonpublic schools electing to seek accreditation from the State Board of Education
- Monitor school districts to verify compliance with applicable accreditation requirements through (1) investigative evaluations (complaints against school districts), (2) annual personnel data reports, and (3) reports from other state or federal programs
- Provide technical assistance and training on matters related to the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards*

What you need to know...

- To access the current edition of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards*, visit the Office of Accreditation's homepage at <http://www.mdek12.org/accred>

Career & Technical Education

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3974

Dr. Aimee Brown
State Director
acbrown@mdek12.org

Rozelia Harris
Director, Reporting and Compliance
rharris@mdek12.org

Shanta Villanueva
Director, Student Organizations
svillanueva@mdek12.org

Tonya Gipson
Director, Instructional Development
tgipson@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Create and maintain high school workforce readiness programs that link to high skill, high wage jobs and post-secondary education
- Oversee 10 student organizations that provide opportunities for students to learn leadership and communication skills
- Oversee all financial and audit responsibilities for Career and Technical Education within the state

What you need to know...

- **Carl D. Perkins Act** – The [*Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act*](#) reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins) and is referred to as Perkins V. Perkins V aims to increase access to high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that meet the changing needs of students and employers. Perkins V gives states and local communities the opportunity to build and implement a vision for CTE that uniquely supports the range of educational needs of students — exploration through career preparation — and balances those student needs with the current and emerging needs of the economy.

Child Nutrition

Get in touch with us...

601-576-5000

Scott Clements

State Director

sclements@mdek12.org

Mary Burks

Schools Support

mburks@mdek12.org

April Catchings

Training and Outreach

acatchings@mdek12.org

Susie Evans-Gater

**Child and Adult Care & Summer Food
Service Programs**

mclayborne@mdek12.org

Bill Urban

Purchasing and Food Distribution

burban@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Administer USDA special nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch & School Breakfast Programs, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and USDA Foods distribution
- Operate the MS Statewide Purchasing System, providing over 650 high quality and student approved items at a substantial cost savings to schools and other participating organizations
- Provide training and technical assistance for participating organizations' staff

What you need to know...

- **Mississippi Recipes for Success (MRS)** – This free resource provides hundreds of recipes for use in school food service that have been thoroughly tested for yield, flavor and quality, and comply with all USDA nutrition standards. MRS is available in print or online format, with complete nutrient analysis for each recipe: <http://mrs.mdek12.org/>.
- **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** – More than half of the State's school districts participate in the Summer Food Service Program, reaching children who don't have access to healthy meals when school is out. The SFSP offers flexibility in meal types and service locations, with no minimum number of sites. Please contact our office to inquire about joining the SFSP or expanding your district's participation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkLGTOfRr8w>
- **Equipment Grants for Schools** – The Office of Child Nutrition administers Nutrition Integrity and USDA Equipment grant programs. Through a partnership with the Bower Foundation, Nutrition Integrity grants provide matching funds for schools to improve school health by replacing deep fat fryers with combination oven steamers that provide the

taste and texture of foods preferred by students but with less fat and calories. USDA Equipment grants may be used to purchase critical kitchen equipment.

Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement

Get in touch with us...

601-359-5743

Quentin Ransburg

Equity Officer

qransburg@mdek12.org

Vacant

Bureau Director

Latoya Forbes

Project Officer IV

lforbes@mdek12.org

Danny Rochelle

Juvenile Detention Centers

drochelle@mdek12.org

Terissa Williams

Foster Care Coordinator

twilliams@mdek12.org

Cheryl Mickens

***School Attendance Officer Supervisor
(Central District)***

cmickens@mdek12.org

Korby Mann

***School Attendance Officer Supervisor
(Southern District)***

klmann@mdek12.org

Allison Crain

***School Attendance Officer Supervisor
(Northern District)***

acrain@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Ensure that all students between the ages of 6-17 are enrolled and attending a public, private or home school
(MS. Code 37-13-91)
- Ensure that educational services are provided to youth in Juvenile Detention Centers
(MS. Code 43-21-321)
- Ensure that educational services are provided for students placed in Alternative Education
(MS. Code 37-13-92)
- Provide information regarding Mandated Reporting
(MS. Code 43-21-353)
- Ensure that school districts comply with the Foster Care Enrollment Guidelines outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

What you need to know...

- **Mandated Reporting** – State mandate for identifying and reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS). Individuals may call 1-800-222-8000 or download the MDCPS Report Child Abuse app to report suspected activity.
 - **Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care** – Federal requirements for the educational stability of students placed in foster care ensuring minimal educational disruption. Each district must have two (2) points of contact.
 - **Trauma-Skilled Schools Model** – Improving school outcomes for trauma-impacted students through the means of:
 - Individualized trauma response to adverse happenings that are experienced, witnessed and encountered
 - Building a systemic, intentional, and consistent culture that fosters key resilience factors
 - Developing skills that the team members can use in response to the context in response to trauma
 - **Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) Education Programs** – Training and technical assistance meetings held on a quarterly basis with JDC education program sponsoring school districts. For these programs:
 - Each district must have two (2) points of contact to retrieve and disseminate student records, if requested, by any of the detention facilities
 - The sponsoring district, chosen by the youth court judge, is responsible for providing educational services to the youth detainees. All districts, including the sponsoring district, share in the total cost of the educational program.
 - **Alternative Education and High School Equivalency** – As outlined in MS Code Ann. §37-13-92, State Board Policy Chapter 7, Rule 7.1 - Rule 7.2 (High School Equivalency Guidelines), and Accreditation Standards 22 & 23. The Alternative School Program provides students an opportunity to continue their education in a more restrictive environment for a specified period, until behavior requirements have been met. Alternative Education Guidance Document can be found at https://www.mdek12.org/OCSA/AE_GED.
 - **Chronic Absenteeism** – Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent (18 days) or more of the school year for any reason (unexcused/excused absences or suspensions).
-

Curriculum & Instruction

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3461

Dr. Marla Davis
Bureau Director
mdavis@mdek12.org

Chonette Bouldin
Special Projects Officer
cbouldin@mdek12.org

Natalie Crowder
K-12 English Language Arts Content Director
ncrowder@mdek12.org

Limeul Eubanks
Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts & World Languages
leubanks@mdek12.org

Sara Flowers*
Assistant Director, Algebra Nation
sflowers@mdek12.org

Dr. Kevin Gaylor
K-12 Science Content Director
kgaylor@mdek12.org

Tommisha Johnson
K-12 Mathematics Content Director
tjohnson@mdek12.org

Heather Morrison
Dual Enrollment-Dual Credit & Advanced Programs
hmorrison@ihl.state.ms.us

Sha Walker
State Lead, JumpStart ACT Test Prep*
sha@jumpstarttestprep.com

What we do...

- Audit of secondary school programs, districts, and schools
- Oversight, design, and management of the Middle School Pilot Initiative Program
- Develop and implement curriculum, instructional materials, and programs aligned to the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards in core subjects
- Provide on-site professional development and technical assistance to teachers in core subjects and STEM-related courses
- Implementation of the High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) statewide initiative for Math & ELA
- Design and assist in the national promotion, mentorship, and selection of state-level finalists for the PAEMST Award
- Evaluate programs and course offerings for the MOCA process
- Oversight, promotion, and assistance in the selection of nominations for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

* legislatively funded program

What you need to know...

- **Math Content Leader Trainings** – In partnership with Teaching Lab, the MDE will be working with approximately 10 school district teams to develop a cadre of Math Teacher Content Leaders in increasing their math content knowledge and pedagogy to become "ambassadors" for High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and Practices.
- **Essentials for College Literacy / Mathematics Courses** – At the September 2020 State Board of Education (SBE) Meeting, the SBE will review a request to suspend the ACT sub-score enrollment requirement for the 2020-2021 school year due to COVID-19 assessment restrictions nationwide during the Spring and Summer 2020. The results of this board item (and guidance, if approved) will be shared with districts shortly after the meeting.
- **Algebra Nation** – Through funds appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature, all MS public school districts will have access to the Algebra Nation platform for a fourth year. Access includes free workbooks for all Algebra I students and 24/7 access to resources for classroom teachers, students, and families aligned to the MS CCRS Algebra I course. Additional resources are being developed to meet the needs of English Language learners and classroom teachers in non-Algebra and pre-Algebra "type" courses.
- **MPB Classroom for TV** – In partnership with the MDE, Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB) has developed a new educational channel (MPB Classroom for TV) in wake of schools re-opening due to COVID-19. Content and Literacy Staff at the MDE helped to develop the channel's content whose main goal is to provide students across the state with access to high-quality, teacher facilitated lessons in a variety of content areas.
- **Equipped: Mississippi for All** – The Booklist intends to equip educators as they make purposeful instructional decisions around the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards while promoting literacy that acknowledges a variety of text types. A robust list for multiple grade bands was curated and vetted with the support from teachers and educational leaders. Visit <https://mdek12.org/OEER/Equipped-Booklist/lists> to view current lists.
- **College and Career Readiness (CCR) Course Resources** – The CCR curriculum outlines the knowledge secondary students should obtain and the types of skills relevant for a successful transition to postsecondary and the workforce. **This course is a graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2022.** CCR resources, including a recorded from the Summer 2020 virtual training, can be found at <https://www.mdek12.org/ese/College-and-Career-Readiness>.
- **Dual Enrollment/Credit and Accelerated Programs** –The Mississippi Dual Enrollment and Accelerated Programs Fall 2020 Procedures Manual is located on the MDE Secondary Education Accelerated Programs webpage. Additional information concerning Accelerated Programs, including administrator resources for Advanced Placement courses, are also available there. Visit the website <https://www.mdek12.org/ESE/Accelerated-Programs> for more information.

- **Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter Website** – This new website [Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter](#) offers a centralized location for Mississippi math, English and social studies teachers to review high-quality, standards-aligned materials that have been evaluated and adopted by other Mississippi teachers and school districts. And, sheds light on the selection process at the state level.
- **HQIM ELA Rubric** – Rubrics for evaluating current instructional resources, textbooks, and materials are available for school and district use at <https://www.mdek12.org/HQIM> as well as the Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter website. The High-Quality Instructional Materials ELA Review Rubric was developed in partnership with EdReports® and Student Achievement Partners for local-level use in Mississippi public schools. The Rubric will be used to identify resources for textbook adoption.
- **Arts Learning Standards for Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts** – These Standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that students need for success in college and careers and to compete in the global economy. The Arts standards also serve to empower and inspire arts educators and their students to explore the many facets of the arts while preparing them for a lifetime of engagement with art forms. Ensuring a “Well-Rounded Education” means that all students have access and the opportunity to experience a high-quality instruction in the Arts (Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts). For more information on the standards and resources visit www.mdek12.org/ESE/Arts.
- **Mississippi World Languages Framework and Teaching Guide** – The purpose of this guide is to help teachers and administrators understand and effectively implement the Mississippi World Languages Framework. This document is also meant to be a reference for World Language teachers as a comprehensive document which links multiple resources, programs, websites, and research that are important and of interest to World Language teachers. It will be beneficial for the first-year teacher as well as the veteran teacher to use. This document contains research on best practices, the latest trends in presentation of material, assessment, and the use of technology. For more information visit www.mdek12.org/ese/worldlanguages.
- **Mississippi Seal of Biliteracy** – This Seal recognizes and awards students who have attained proficiency in one or more world languages and English by high school graduation. The Seal of Biliteracy demonstrates attainment of biliteracy for students, employers, and postsecondary institutions; and it signals a student's readiness for college and career and for engagement as a global citizen. Participation in the Seal of Biliteracy shall be determined by each Local Education Agencies (LEAs). Recognition for demonstrating a level of biliteracy shall be indicated on the final high school transcript for students. For more information regarding the purpose of the Mississippi Seal of Biliteracy Guidelines and resources to local school districts on the process of awarding and recognizing students who are eligible to receive a Seal of Biliteracy visit www.mdek12.org/ese/worldlanguages.
- **Middle School Pilot Initiative 2020** – The Middle School Initiative Pilot 2020 continues to help teachers and leaders develop skills that support middle school students' social, emotional, and academic development. Approximately 20 public

schools across the state are supported individually and in networked communities through site visits, professional development, teacher and leadership capacity building, rigorous coursework offerings, and instructional reviews. These supports are provided through a sustained partnership between the MDE and the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Additional supports are provided by CASEL, the RCU at Mississippi State University and AP College Board.

- **The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)** – The current PAEMST award cycle for K-6 teachers will close October 26, 2020. State level finalists will be selected by an anonymous committee and announced in December 2020. National level winners are honored in D.C, each year and are awarded a \$10,000 award for their personal use. These winners are identified within 1.5 years of the award cycle closing.

The upcoming PAEMST award cycle, for 7-12 teachers, will open in late Fall. Outstanding educators that can show exemplary practices via a classroom video and several writing narratives are encouraged to apply when the application window opens. For more information please visit www.paemst.org.

- **Content Area Listservs** – Administrators are encouraged to have all content area educators sign up for their respective listservs. Educators may register online at www.mdek12.org/ESE or at <https://mdek12.org/OEER>.
-

District & School Performance

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3514 or 601-359-1060

C. Alan Burrow
Executive Director
aburrow@mdek12.org

Cody Shumaker
Director of Accountability Services
cshumaker@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Produce and report district and school accountability ratings that reflect performance through given indicators
- Facilitate the inclusion of all stakeholders through established methods and nationally recognized best practices
- Ensure compliance with federal and state mandated accountability standards and reporting requirements
- Assist districts and schools with data quality issues to ensure accurate measures of success

What you need to know...

- **ODSP Webpage** – For up-to-date information and resources regarding accountability measures and business rules regarding accountability, please refer to the ODSP web page at <https://www.mdek12.org/OA/ODSP>.
- **Data Quality Improvement** – Quality data from the district is very important to many accountability measures. District and school administrators should work to ensure that the data entered into MSIS is timely and accurate. Also, we ask that you pay careful attention to deadlines for data entry.
- **Accountability Task Force** – The MDE works through the Accountability Task Force to discuss suggestions and proposed changes to the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System. The Task Force will continue to meet regularly to work through proposed changes to accountability rules and help to ensure that the Accountability System accurately reflects school and district performance.

Early Childhood

Get in touch with us...

601-359-2932

Dr. Jill Dent
State Director
jdent@mdek12.org

Kelly Carmody
Assistant Director
kcarmody@mdek12.org

LaTessa Long
**Early Learning Collaborative
Coordinator**
llong@mdek12.org

Elizabeth Stone-Grimes
**Early Learning Collaborative
Coordinator**
mstone@mdek12.org

Joyce Greer
**Early Childhood Instructional
Specialist**
jgreer@mdek12.org

Candice Taylor
**Early Childhood Special Education &
619 Coordinator**
cataylor@mdek12.org

Kristi Gary
Office Coordinator
kgary@mdek12.org

Robin Haney
Data & Reporting Coordinator
rhane@mded12.org

Angela Towers
**Family Engagement Transition
Coordinator**
atowers@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Provide guidance, standards, and supports for public school Pre-K and Kindergarten settings
- Provide professional development and technical assistance to Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers and administrators
- Coordinate and facilitate the Early Learning Collaborative Grant Program
- Coordinate and facilitate the Blended Pre-K Grant Program

Amye Hoskins
Professional Development Specialist
ahoskins@mdek12.org

Jayme Jones
Professional Development Specialist
jajones@mdek12.org

Adrienne Mercer
Early Childhood Regional Coordinator
amercer@mdek12.org

Deeda Paula
Early Childhood Coach
dpaul@mdek12.org

Marisa Prewitt
Early Childhood Coach
mprewitt@mdek12.org

Merry Pennell
Early Childhood Coach
mpennell@mdek12.org

Oki Ragins
Early Childhood Coach
oragins@mdek12.org

Sandra Watkins
Early Childhood Coach
swatkins@mdek12.org

Kathy Wall
Early Childhood Coach
kwall@mdek12.org

Tonya Pickens
Early Childhood Coach
tpickens@mdek12.org

Robin Brand
Early Childhood Coach
rbrand@mdek12.org

Lydia Boutwell
Contract Worker
lboutwell@mdek12.org

What you need to know...

- **Early Learning Guidelines and Early Learning Standards** – The recently revised guidelines included all the NIEER benchmarks with policy changes, except the coaching component which will take time to implement. The new Early Learning Standards (for infants through four-year-old children) have been revised to include infants and toddlers which create an alignment of standards from birth through 12th grade. Visit <https://mdek12.org/EC/Guidelines-and-Standards> for more information.
 - **Brigance** – The Comprehensive Early Learning Observation Screener is a developmental screening tool to be used in Early Learning Collaborative classrooms as well as all other funded Pre-K classrooms to support early detection of delays in the development of children.
 - **Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)** – CLASS is an observation instrument to assess classroom quality in preschool classrooms through three dimensions: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, Instructional Support. All public school and collaborative Pre-Kindergarten classrooms will be monitored using this system. Public Pre-K classrooms will be monitored during the 2020-2021 school year based on the Accreditation cyclical monitoring schedule.
 - **Effectiveness Evaluation Plan** – Schools providing services to Pre-K children will receive an evaluation to ensure the quality and effectiveness of services on improving children's learning and well-being. Evaluation occurs for the Early Learning Collaboratives, Blended Grant Programs and other Pre-K classrooms (e.g. Title I, local-funded, tuition-based) in Mississippi public schools. Evaluation consists of two parts: rate of readiness and monitoring. Please find the complete plan included in the *Early Learning Guidelines for Classrooms Serving Three- and Four-Year-Old Children* at www.mdek12.org/ec.
 - **Implementation of the Kellogg Pre-K Grant** – This infrastructure grant will support teachers statewide in the Collaboratives and other funded Pre-K settings to implement high quality developmentally-appropriate practices in their classrooms. Major grant activities include professional development and coaching support, Pre-K program evaluation to ensure program quality and student progress, implementation of developmental assessments for Pre-K students, and assistance with increasing family engagement in their children's education.
-

Educator Effectiveness

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3631

Dr. Courtney Van Cleve
Bureau Director
cvancleve@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Manage the implementation and training for the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth Systems
- Provide technical assistance to districts to ensure compliance with MDE policies, state statute, and national legislation for educator effectiveness
- Collaborate with the divisions of Educator Talent Acquisition, Preparation, and Licensure to support districts in recruiting and retaining effective educators

What you need to know...

- **Professional Growth System** – The Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System (PGS) is designed to improve student achievement by providing teachers and administrators with feedback to inform continuous improvement. For the 2020-2021 school year, the State Board of Education approved a one-year suspension of the requirement for districts to submit annual employee performance data via SharePoint. While this suspension removes sanctions for districts failing to submit effectiveness data for educators, the MDE recommends that districts join future PGS trainings to both support professional growth and prepare for upcoming school years in which the requirements are reinstated. Resources and additional information can be found at <https://www.mdek12.org/OTL/OTC/professional-growth-system>.
- **Professional Growth System (PGS) Training** – In an effort to increase district access to PGS training opportunities, the MDE is currently working to add virtual sessions for the 2020-2021 school year. These collaborative, application-based sessions will focus on building a PGS knowledge base, observation and coaching practice, score calibration, and implementing professional growth cycles. As upcoming sessions become available, registration information can be found at <https://gsmu.mdek12.org/Public/Course/Browse>.

Educator Licensure

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3483

teachersupport@mdek12.org

Dr. Cory Murphy
Executive Director
cmurphy@mdek12.org

Erica Coleman
Assistant Director
ecoleman@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Administer the licensing and verification of all educators and administrators working in Mississippi public schools
- Provide resources to assist school districts in maintaining compliance with state law

What you need to know...

- **Reminder: Required Submission of Appendix B: Annual Report Form for Superintendent of Education for Reporting Infractions Under Miss. Code Ann. §37-3-2 is due by October 1** – Please submit the original completed notarized form via postal mail no later than the established deadline.
For your convenience, you may access a copy of the current version of the Procedures for Reporting Infractions Handbook. Page eight (8) represents the required form referenced herein, via the following web link: <https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/documents/OEL/OEM/Procedures-for-Reporting-Infractions.pdf>.

Please send an electronic copy of the completed, notarized form to Mr. Brian McGairty via email at bmcgairty@mdek12.org to expedite the updating of our records.. And submit the original notarized form via postal mail using the following address:

Mississippi Department of Education
Division of Educator Licensure
Post Office Box 771
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0771

Should you have questions, please contact Mr. Brian McGairty, Director of the Division of Educator Misconduct, at bmcgairty@mdek12.org.

- **Changes to Special Non-Renewable Licenses for Non-Traditional Prospective Candidates** – On March 26, 2020, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved a request to modify the Special Non-Renewable License for Prospective Non-Traditional Teacher Preparation Program Completers. The modifications are being implemented for the purpose of strengthening the requirements for obtaining and maintaining this license type. A summary of changes includes but, are not limited to the following:

To be considered for eligibility to obtain the Years Two and Three license, the candidate shall:

- Demonstrate sufficient progress toward completion of requirements for obtaining full state certification
- During the school year the valid special, non-renewable license is issued, the employing Mississippi local school district or eligible nonpublic school shall provide the special, non-renewable license holder:
 - a. Appropriate ongoing activities that lead to obtaining unconditional admission to a Mississippi State Board of Education approved non-traditional teacher preparation program as one criterion for the issuance of Year Three license; **and**
 - b. High-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused; **and**
 - c. Intensive supervision that consists of structured guidance and regular ongoing support or teacher mentoring with a fully certified teacher.

Please access the current version of the Mississippi Guidelines for Educator Licensure K-12 via the following web link to review requirements for this license type in its entirety: <https://www.mdek12.org/licensure>.

- **Educator Licensure Application Processing** – We appreciate your patience as we continue to work diligently around the clock to process all application requests in a timely manner. Bearing in mind that all applicants are facing strict deadlines, the members of our Licensure team have committed to working seven (7) days a week during and after normal business hours in an effort to meet the demand. We'd like to note here that we are not experiencing a delay in processing time rather, on a weekly basis, we are facing the submission of hundreds upon hundreds more applications than normal, due to the suspension of certain licensure requirements in recent months. We apologize for the temporary inconvenience the increased number of application requests for licensure is causing. Nonetheless, we want to make certain that while we are moving with a sense of urgency, all applications are processed not only in an efficient manner, but accurately.
-

Educator Preparation

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3631

Dr. Debra B. Burson
Bureau Director
dburson@mdek12.org

Regina Chatman
Division Director II
rchatman@mdek12.org

Dr. Deborah Stoulig
Office Director II
dstoulig@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Collaborate with Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) to ensure we have effective teachers and leaders for all Mississippi schools
- Coordinate national accreditation visits, conduct program reviews, and assess annual reports for EPPs
- Provide technical assistance to Mississippi EPPs to ensure compliance with MDE policies, state statutes, and state and national standards for educator preparation
- Collaborate with the Division of Educator Talent Acquisition, Division of Educator Effectiveness, and Division of Licensure to provide support to EPPs and districts in attracting, supporting, and retaining effective educators

What you need to know...

- **State Partnership with the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)** – The MDE partners with CAEP, national accreditor for educator preparation, to ensure high-quality preparation for teachers and leaders in the state of Mississippi.
- **Mississippi's Process and Performance Review** – The Division of Educator Preparation is revising the state's guidelines for performance review of EPPs to ensure state and national standards for educator preparation are being met.

Educator Talent Acquisition

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3631

Dr. Cory Murphy
Executive Director
cmurphy@mdek12.org

Vanessa Wilbert
Assistant Director
vwilbert@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Provide support to districts in attracting, supporting, and retaining effective educators
- Assist districts in the identification and implementation of strategies to eliminate barriers to equitable access to effective teachers
- Support prospective teachers to and through licensure

What you need to know...

- **Teacher Pipeline** – In an effort to address teacher shortages, this office launched the Mississippi's Grow-Your-Own Initiative. The goals of this initiative are to 1) create a pipeline of highly effective teachers and 2) improve teacher retention in districts with high teacher attrition. The MDE's goal is to provide guidance, strategies, and support for school districts to establish and maintain a local Grow-Your-Own initiative. The Grow-Your-Own initiative is an umbrella that includes three strategies, all aimed at developing a sustainable teacher workforce in communities with the greatest critical shortage challenges. These strategies include developing and/or strengthening the Teacher Academies and Educators Rising chapters in critical shortage school districts, developing a structured partnership between critical shortage school districts and EPPs, and the development of community college partnerships with EPPs. Additional information is available at <https://www.mdek12.org/OETA/Mississippis-Grow-Your-Own-Teacher-Initiative>
- **TeachMS Campaign and Recruiters** – This is a statewide campaign aimed at elevating the teaching profession and attracting new teachers. Additionally, we now have full-time teacher recruiters who actively recruit new teachers to the teaching profession. Additional information is available at <https://teachms.org/current-educators/>.



Elementary Education & Reading

Get in touch with us...

601-359-2586

Tenette Smith
Executive Director
Tenette.smith@mdek12.org

Melissa Banks
Instructional Technology Specialist
mebanks@mdek12.org

vacant
Specialist Gifted Education

Verna Covington, CPM
Accounting Specialist Senior
vcovington@mdek12.org

Delicia Ross
Special Projects Officer
dross@mdek12.org

Elizabeth Simmons
School Library Specialist
esimmons@mdek12.org

Chauncey Spears
Textbook Office
Director
crspears@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Develop elementary curriculum and instructional material aligned to the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards
- Manage Early Childhood, Intervention, Library, Literacy and Textbook Procurement services provided to schools and districts
- Provide technical assistance and professional development on the effective implementation of technology tools in classroom instruction and assessment
- Develop and publish resources to support districts, schools, administrators, teachers and parents
- Design and deliver professional development and technical assistance to Pre-K-12 grade school librarians, administrators and for Gifted Education programming
- Coordinate textbook adoption, distribution, care and use in Mississippi's schools – both public and non-public – and the Textbook Inventory Management System (TIMS)

What you need to know...

- **Equipped: Mississippi for All** – The Booklist intends to equip educators as they make purposeful instructional decisions around the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards while promoting literacy that acknowledges a variety of text types. A robust list for multiple grade bands was curated and vetted with the support from teachers and educational leaders. Visit <https://mdek12.org/OEER/Equipped-Booklist/lists> to view current lists.
- **Professional Development on Technology Tools** – Professional Development is offered on the effective implementation of technology tools in classroom instruction and assessment. The technology tools provided are free and easy-to-use. Trainings are provided for all content areas and grade levels.
- **SAMR** – SAMR is a model designed to help educators evaluate how they are incorporating technology into instruction and assessment. The goal is to transform learning experiences, so they result in higher levels of achievement for students.
- **School Library Guide** – Effective school libraries are dynamic learning environments that bridge the information literacy gap for all PreK-12 learners. The *2020 School Library Guide* was updated to align with and supports the new library monitoring rubric. It provides librarians, administrators, and teachers with the tools necessary to create and promote an effective school library program. Additional information is available at <https://www.mdek12.org/Library>.
- **Outcomes for Gifted Education Programs** – Monthly webinars are hosted on the last Monday of the month to support the implementation of the Outcomes. Webinar recordings are available at <http://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/ALGP>.
- **Content Area Listservs** – Administrators are encouraged to have all content area educators sign up for their respective listservs. Educators may register online at www.mdek12.org/ESE and at <https://mdek12.org/OEER>.
- **Textbooks:** The Textbook Adoption process will commence in Fall 2020 with adoptions in the following subject areas:
 - Reading/ELA/Handwriting K-12
 - Career and Technical Education- Select Courses in the STEM, Business Management and Trades, Family and Consumer sciences, and Law and public Safety
 - Pre-K Comprehensive

As of the date of this document, the specific dates and timelines are not finalized, but we plan to have the adoption list ready by early Spring 2021. Also, as a reminder: Make sure your Textbook Inventory Management System (TIMS) databases are up-to-date and accurate.

Federal Programs

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3499

Quentin Ransburg
Equity Officer
qransburg@mdek12.org

Judy Nelson
Executive Director
jnelson@mdek12.org

Keondra Wallace
Assistant to the Executive Director
kwallace@mdek12.org

Arthur Goss
Coordinator, Fiscal and Procurement
agoss@mdek12.org

Vacant
Bureau Director, District and School Support

Vacant
Assistant to the Bureau Director

Vacant
Director, Data Collection and Reporting

Greg Smith
Coordinator, Data Collection and Reporting
gsmith@mdek12.org

Farrah R. Nicholson
Director, Competitive Grant Programs
fnicholson@mdek12.org

LaDwayne Harris
Coordinator, Homeless Education
laharris@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Provide leadership and guidance in the effective use of federal funds to improve student achievement
- Monitor the implementation of program requirements and expenditures of federal funds at the local level to assure program quality
- Support state and local reform efforts to improve teaching and learning, student achievement, and family engagement strategies
- Facilitate on-site professional development and technical assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs), community-based organizations (CBOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), charter schools, private schools, and other state agencies

Bryan Lieb, Esq.
***Ombudsman & Coordinator of
Private Schools & Migrants***
blieb@mdek12.org

Christopher Norwood
***Coordinator, 21st Century Community
Learning Centers***
crnorwood@mdek12.org

Vacant
***Specialist, 21st Century Community
Learning Centers***

Brendsha Roby-Fletcher
***Director, Non-Competitive Grant
Programs***
brroby@mdek12.org

Barbara Greene
Coordinator, Parent Engagement
bgreene@mdek12.org

Tiffany Jones
***Coordinator, Teacher Quality &
Neglected and Delinquent***
ttjones@mdek12.org

Dr. Melissa Levy-Jackson,
***Coordinator, English Learners &
Immigrants***
mlevy@mdek12.org

Dr. Diona Thomas
Director, Monitoring and Compliance
dithomas@mdek12.org

Jerrika Mabry
Specialist, Monitoring and Compliance
jmabry@mdek12.org

Tonya McDonald
Specialist, Federal Grants
tmcdonald@mdek12.org

Kerry Thomas
Coordinator, Title IV & Title V
dithomas@mdek12.org

Betina White
Coordinator, Monitoring and Compliance
bswhite@mdek12.org

John Woodard
Coordinator, Charter Schools & Corrective Action Plans
jwoodard@mdek12.org

What you need to know...

- **MCAPS** — Mississippi Comprehensive Automated Performance-Based System (MCAPS) is an online application system for the Mississippi Department of Education. It houses the consolidated federal programs application for Titles I, II, III, IV and V, Neglected and Delinquent; ESSER funds; Competitive grants: Homeless Education and 21st Century Community Learning Centers. It also houses the IDEA application and the 1003(a) application. The system contains resource information for districts and schools in the MDE Document Library. You can explore MCAPS here: <https://mcaps.mdek12.org>.
 - **Schoolwide Plans** — For Title I schools operating schoolwide programs, federal law and guidance requires a district-approved schoolwide plan for each school annually. Please ensure your Title I school has an approved schoolwide plan in MCAPS.
 - **Title Programs On-site Monitoring** — Monitoring federal programs of the LEA ensures compliance with federal regulations as well as assures quality programming and instructional delivery of at-risk populations. Required documentation is to be maintained, accessible, and readily available for OFP staff during the monitoring visit. Documentation should be organized in folders in the LEA Document Library, labeled, and correspond to the indicators of the consolidated monitoring instrument. District and school administrators should be available for interview by OFP staff during the monitoring visit. If technical assistance is needed, please contact the Office of Federal Programs.
-

Healthy Schools

Get in touch with us...

601-359-1737

Scott Clements

State Director

SClements@mdek12.org

Louis King

Office Director

lking@mdek12.org

J. Dale Dieckman

Physical Education

jdieckman@mdek12.org

Larry Calhoun

Move to Learn

lcalhoun@mdek12.org

Connie Board

School Nurse Consultant

cboard@mdek12.org

Sharonda Bank

CDC: HIV/Youth Risk Behavior

shbanks@mdek12.org

Kegila Lyles

SBAC Specialist

kslyles@mdek12.org

Shuntaneka Taylor

Accounting Specialist

shtaylor@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Promote student achievement and increase academic performance by improving student health - *Health is Academic!*
- Provide training, technical assistance, and resources to promote school health and compliance with the Healthy Students Act
- Collect and report critical data to improve school health
- Provide guidance to School Nurses on evidence-based practice measures to meet school health needs

What you need to know...

- **Move to Learn** – Studies have shown that physical activity increases children's ability to learn, and as fitness improves, test scores improve. That's why *Move to Learn* incorporates movement in the classroom through short exercise videos and healthy lesson plans. Visit <http://www.movetolearnms.org/> for free resources or to schedule a MTL Live! event at your school.

- **School Based Administrative Claiming (SBAC)** – The SBAC program offers school districts an excellent opportunity to obtain additional funding as reimbursements for the time staff spend assisting students and their families learn about Medicaid, Medicaid benefits, and other health care needs.
 - **Menu of Services** – Technical assistance and resources are available in the areas of Physical Education Curriculum and Instruction, School Nurse training and resources, Framework Revisions for Contemporary School Health and Physical Education, HIV/AIDS/STD/Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and School Health.
-

Intervention Services

Get in touch with us...

601-359-2586

Laurie Weathersby
Bureau Director
lweathersby@mdek12.org

Jayda Brantley
Academic Specialist & Intervention
jbrantley@mdek12.org

Sandra Elliott
English Learner Specialist & Intervention
selliott@mdek12.org

Mathis Sheriff
Academic Specialist & Intervention
msheriff@mdek12.org

Jackie Mockbee
Dyslexia Support Service Specialist
jmockbee@mdek12.org

Ginger Koestler
Behavior Specialist & Intervention
gkoestler@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Provide technical assistance on the implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Early Warning System, Dyslexia Initiatives, Early Childhood, and English Learner Supports
- Coordinate and manage the process for reviewing and awarding the 2020-2021 Dyslexia Scholarships, the 2018-2021 Dyslexia Grant to districts, and the selection process of State Board of Education approved list of dyslexia screeners
- Develop and publish academic and behavioral resource documents to support districts, schools, administrators, teachers and parents with improving student outcomes
- Provide schools and districts with updated guidance and supports for dyslexia, MTSS (academic and behavior), gifted, and English learners

What you need to know...

- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports** – Intervention Services provides guidance to districts on the implementation of the essential components of MTSS for effective team-based problem solving that is data-informed, evidence-based, and flexible enough to meet the academic and the behavioral needs of all students. Professional development opportunities are offered to support MTSS implementation. Additional resources can be found by visiting the Intervention Services page at <http://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices>. The new editable MTSS Documentation Packet is now available online under Resources by clicking on the link listed above.
- **New MTSS Guidance Document** – Intervention Services convened a diverse group of educators, administrators, interventionists, and counselors to provide feedback on the establishment and implementation of MTSS policies as well as the development of resources and the new MTSS Guidance Document that was published in June 2020.
- **MTSS Summer Webinar Series** – Intervention Services delivered a summer webinar series to address intervention supports through distance learning. This four-week series can be found on the Intervention Services page at <http://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices>. The webinar recordings are included along with the PowerPoint slides.
- **Dyslexia Webinar Series** – Intervention Services delivered a two-part webinar series that included the new state-approved dyslexia screeners, classroom accommodations, and supports that can be provided to students in the classroom. This webinar series can be found on the Dyslexia homepage at <https://mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/Dyslexia>. The webinar recordings are included along with the PowerPoint slides.
- **MTSS Professional Development and Technical Assistance** – Intervention Services provides professional development and technical assistance to districts and schools at no cost. All supports are designed to meet the specific needs of the district or school. To request support, complete the Professional Development Request form found on the Intervention Services webpage <https://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices>.
- **English Learner (EL) Guidance Document** – Intervention Services developed an *Instructional Strategies and Supports for English Learners Guidance Document* to provide teachers information that will assist them with the planning and delivery of effective instruction specifically designed to meet the needs of English Learners. This document provides teachers and administrators specific evidence-based strategies to ensure EL students can achieve the same standards of performance we ask of other students.

Professional development opportunities are offered to support teachers of English Learners. Other available documents include: Supports for Parents of English Learners (a guide to help parents understand what it means to be an English learner) and the EL Progress Checklist (a resource to assist schools in setting language goals for students). Visit <http://www.mdek12.org/EL> for all EL resources that support effective implementation of EL services.

- **English Learner Check-in, Video and Webinar Support** – Intervention Services in cooperation with the Offices of Literacy, Student Assessment and Federal Programs, has

created and posted webinars, video supports for instruction of ELs. The three-part summer webinar series addresses English learner supports through distance learning. All EL supports can be found at <https://www.mdek12.org/EL>. The webinar recordings are included along with the PowerPoint slides.

- **English Learner Professional Development and Technical Assistance** – Intervention Services, in cooperation with other MDE office, provides professional development and technical assistance to districts and schools at no cost. All supports are designed to meet the specific needs of your district or school. To request support, complete the Professional Development Request form found on the English Learner Supports page <https://www.mdek12.org/EL>.
- **Student Dyslexia Scholarships** – Students in grades 1 – 12 with a dyslexia diagnosis are eligible to apply for a scholarship to attend an MDE approved non-public school. These students must have been in attendance in a public school the previous year prior to requesting the scholarship, have a dyslexia diagnosis, **and** be accepted into a non-public school that meets legislative criteria. Professional development trainings are available for school districts to receive more information on dyslexia. Visit <http://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/Dyslexia> for dyslexia resources.
- **Dyslexia Grants** – The purpose of the dyslexia grant is to assist school districts in piloting programs needed to meet the needs of regular education students identified as having dyslexia and other related disorders and in need of a multisensory, systematic language-based instruction and programming, in accordance with Mississippi Code §37-23-15. It is the intent of the MDE that these dyslexia programs support the needs of identified students in accordance with the College- and Career-Readiness Standards, the State Board of Education Goals, and State Board Policy 41.1 on the Intervention Process. The current grant cycle is 2018 – 2021.
- **SBE Approved List of Dyslexia Screeners** – Section 37-173-15 of House Bill 1046 mandates that each local school district screen students for dyslexia in the spring of their Kindergarten year and the fall of Grade 1 using a State Board of Education approved screener. Visit <http://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/Dyslexia> to access the list of approved screeners. In addition, districts are required to submit dyslexia data on the students who are screened in Kindergarten and Grade 1. The Dyslexia data sheet can be found on the Dyslexia homepage above.
- **Access for All (AFA) Document** – Intervention Services, in collaboration with several offices at the MDE, developed the AFA document to provide educators resources and strategies to assist all students. The document offers adaptations that can be used to support all students in the areas of academics, physical, speech/language, social emotional, behavioral, and organizational. The AFA guide and associated publications can be found at <https://www.mdek12.org/OAE/2019-Access-for-All-Guide>.

JROTC

Get in touch with us...

601-359-1816

Ed Butler, Major, USAF (Ret)

Bureau Director

ebutler@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Represent MDE's interests to the 82 Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs in Mississippi
- Coordinate statewide JROTC competitions and events
- Serve as an information conduit on JROTC matters
- Assist school districts, JROTC units, and service JROTC headquarters on issues related to the JROTC program

What you need to know...

- **JROTC's Purpose** – The purpose of JROTC is to instill in students of the United States secondary educational institutions the values of citizenship, service to the United States, personal responsibility and a sense of accomplishment. JROTC is the nation's largest youth training and development program with over 3,400 units and 560,000 students participating. In Mississippi, we have 82 units, 180 instructors, and nearly 11,000 students (cadets). JROTC's focus is on character education and career preparation. It is **not** a military recruiting program.

JROTC's Curriculum – The JROTC Curriculum is an accredited academic curriculum that is designed to give students the skills they need to be productive and responsible young adults. JROTC can provide a niche for students of varying interests with regional, state, and national competition in academics, drill, air rifle, orienteering, and athletics. JROTC classroom instruction supplements core curriculum in world history, physical science, civics, finance, political science, aviation, physiology, engineering, and international law in addition to character development and leadership/life skills.

In Mississippi, *JROTC I* can fulfill the PE graduation requirement. *JROTC I* and *II* can fulfill the Health graduation requirement. *JROTC III* and *IV* can fulfill the College and Career Readiness (CCR) graduation requirement.

- **JROTC's Alignment** – JROTC is aligned with statewide educational initiatives that are designed to increase the exposure of our cadets to STEM-related career opportunities. Exposure occurs through classroom instruction, field trips to our state's high technology industries, orientation flights with the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, and

participation in STEM summer programs at Mississippi State University, Jackson State University, and William Carey University.

- **JROTC and the National Flight Academy** – Many organizations provide funding to allow JROTC cadets to attend the outstanding, 6-day STEM program at the National Flight Academy at Naval Air Station Pensacola, FL each year.
 - **JROTC State Championships** – For the past five years, the MDE JROTC Bureau has hosted the all-services JROTC State Championships in drill, athletics, and air rifle. All 82 units are eligible to participate.
-

Literacy

Get in touch with us...

601-359-2586

Kristen Wynn

State Director (K-12)

kwells@mdek12.org

Melissa Beck

K-3 Assessment Coordinator

mbeck@mdek12.org

K-3 Assistant State Literacy Coordinators (ASC)

LeighAnne Cheeseman

ASC/EL/LETRS Coordinator

lcheeseman@mdek12.org

Kelli Crain

ASC (Central Region)

kcrain@mdek12.org

Jill Hoda

ASC (Southern Region)

jhoda@mdek12.org

Lori Stringer

ASC (Northern & Delta Regions)

lstringer@mdek12.org

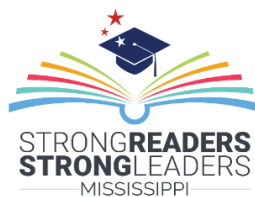
What we do...

- Facilitate the statewide implementation of the Literacy Based Promotion Act (LBPA)
- Provide on-site and virtual Literacy coaching support (i.e., co-teaching modeling, professional learning etc.) to Pre-K-3rd grade teachers in Literacy Support Schools
- Provide regional Literacy professional development to Pre-K- 3rd grade teachers, district support staff, and administrators
- Provide regional Literacy professional development to secondary content area teachers

What you need to know...

- **“Ask a Literacy Coach”** – This new feature gives administrators and teachers a direct connection to the MDE Literacy Leadership Team to ask questions regarding literacy instructional practices and resources. To access this feature, select the “Ask a Coach” button at the bottom of the webpage here: <https://www.mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/ResourceAdmin>
- **Virtual Literacy Instruction Guide for K-5 Teachers** – This resource was developed to help teachers transition to virtual literacy instruction. This document includes a checklist for virtual instruction, a sample virtual literacy schedule, a sample weekly lesson plan using a free, high-quality, standards-aligned, open-educational resource (OER). To access this guidance document visit www.mdek12.org/literacy and select “**Updates for 2020-21 School Year**”.
- **Mississippi LETRS Webpage** – This new webpage serves as the registration and resource site for LETRS (Language Essentials for Teaching Reading and Spelling) training. Visit <https://www.voyagersopris.com/info/ms-solutions/> for details.

- **UFLI Virtual Teaching Hub** – This site was developed to assist teachers as they explore new ways to teach foundational reading skills using technology. This site includes tools to support reading instruction and intervention for children in the elementary grades. The materials are designed to be used with videoconferencing platforms during distance instruction and with interactive whiteboards in the classroom. The activities can also be used to create video lessons for asynchronous lessons. To access the site visit <https://education.ufl.edu/ufl/virtual-teaching/main/>
- **MS Strong Readers Webpage** – This website was developed to help families assist their children with building reading skills at home. The site is organized by grade level, from Pre-K through Grade 5. It includes strategies for developing strong reader habits and a series of activities to practice the five components of reading – which include working with sounds, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Also included are tools for helping families locate books that align with their child’s grade band and a free, online library. To access the site visit <https://strongreadersms.com/>



Professional Development & Innovative Programs

Get in touch with us...

601-359-2957

Wendy Clemons
Executive Director
wclemons@mdek12.org

Dr. Lea Johnson
Bureau Director
lea.johnson@mdek12.org

Jasmine Bell
Professional Development Coordinator
(ELA Grades 6-12)
jbelle@mdek12.org

Elise Brown
Director of Online Professional
Development & Math Grades 6-12
elisebrown@mdek12.org

Jen Cornett
Professional Development Coordinator
(Social Studies Grades K-12)
jcornett@mdek12.org

Amber Fuller
Project Officer
afuller@mdek12.org

Denise Harrison
Professional Development Coordinator
(Special Education)
dharrison@mdek12.org

Kristi Higginbotham
Professional Development Coordinator
(Visually Impaired)
khigginbotham@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Facilitate professional development priorities for the Office of Academic Education
- Implement the Regional Service Delivery Model for professional development throughout the state
- Facilitate the Professional Development Coordinator Model by providing on-demand and online professional development to districts and schools
- Guide schools and districts through the creation of Professional Development plans with the Professional Development Plan Template
- Provide support for Districts and Schools of Innovation

Christy Hunt
Professional Development Coordinator
Special Education
chunt@mdek12.org

Rosalynn Jones
Professional Development Coordinator
(Special Education)
rojones@mdek12.org

Dr. Kristina Livingston
Lead Professional Development Coordinator
klivingston@mdek2.org

Tanjanikia McKinney
Professional Development Coordinator
(Science Grades 6-12)
tanjanikia.mckinney@mdek12.org

Amy Pinkerton
Professional Development Coordinator
(Math Grades K-5)
apinkerton@mdek12.org

Amy Shelly
Professional Development Coordinator
(Special Education)
ashelly@mdek12.org

Melanie Watkins
Professional Development Coordinator
(ELA Grades K-5)
mwatkins@mdek12.org

- Provide support for Dropout Prevention and High School Restructuring plans
- Evaluate programs and course offerings for the MOCA process

What you need to know...

- **Fall 2020 PD Catalog** – Administrators may request face-to-face professional development from the Fall 2020 PD Catalog and educators may find information about online courses by visiting <https://www.mdek12.org/OPD>.
 - **Online PD** – Teachers can register for free online courses each semester by visiting <https://www.mdek12.org/OPD/Online>.
 - **PD on Demand** – Teachers and administrators can access professional development sessions that are great for PLCs and professional growth. More information can be found by visiting <https://www.mdek12.org/OPD/PDOD>.
 - **District and School of Innovation** – Administrators and teachers may review the requirements and application process by visiting <https://www.mdek12.org/ese/Districts-and-Schools-of-Innovation>.
 - **Mississippi Online Course Approval (MOCA)** – Information on applying for course codes for online classes may be found by visiting <https://www.mdek12.org/ESE/OCA>.
 - **District and School Professional Development Plans** – A template and sample plan can be found by visiting <https://www.mdek12.org/OPD/PDR>.
-

School Improvement

Get in touch with us...

601-359-1003

Dr. Sonja J. Robertson
Executive Director
srobertson@mdek12.org

A’Lisa Bryant
Office Manager, School Improvement Programs
abryant@mdek12.org

Mrs. Re’Nona Jackson
Office Manager, School Improvement Programs
rjackson@mdek12.org

Shakinna Patterson
Director, School Improvement Programs
spatterson@mdek12.org

Dr. BoNita Harris
Director, Program Monitoring & Support
bonitaharris@mdek12.org

Dr. Sharita Giles
Coordinator, School Improvement Programs
sgiles@mdek12.org

Noleen Clark
Coordinator, School Improvement Programs
nclark@mdek12.org

Michael McDonald
Lead School Improvement Coach
mimcdonald@mdek12.org

Avence Pittman, Jr.
Lead School Improvement Coach
apittman@mdek12.org

Dr. Lekeisha Sutton
Lead School Improvement Coach
lsutton@mdek12.org

Dr. Tim Wilcox
Lead School Improvement Coach
twilcox@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Provide oversight and ensure the implementation of state legislation for low performing schools
- Provide support for the systemic improvement of the lowest performing schools and districts in the state of Mississippi
- Provide support and oversight to School Improvement Grant (SIG) Schools, Comprehensive Support and Targeted Support and Improvement Schools, and Schools At-Risk
- Provide support through federal funds for schools to support school interventions

What you need to know...

- **Comprehensive and Targeted Support and Improvement** – On March 19, 2020, during its regularly scheduled meeting, the State Board of Education granted approval for districts and schools to maintain the same accountability designation in the 2020 – 2021 school year as assigned in the 2019-20 school year, with no cumulative impact for cases where multiple years with the same designation may lead to more severe consequences.

On March 27, 2020, the USDE approved the request for Mississippi to waive statewide assessments, accountability, and reporting requirements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the 2019-2020 school year due to widespread school closures related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). As part of the waiver, any school that was identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement, or additional targeted support and improvement in the 2019-2020 school year, will maintain that identification status for the 2020-2021 school year.

- **School Improvement Grant (SIG)** – Renewal applications for SIG schools have been approved and the district can now begin requesting funds for Year 4. To strengthen implementation for the 2020-2021 school year, school and district leadership teams should review end of year recommendations from monitoring reports and identify next steps. SIG awarded schools were granted an extension to obligate Year 3 funds through December 31, 2020 and an extension to liquidate Year 3 funds by February 12, 2021. All funding for Year 4 must be obligated by July 31, 2021 and liquidated by September 12, 2021. *** The last day to submit a FY21 (Year 4) revision is January 31, 2021.**
- **Title I, School Improvement 1003 Funds. Districts could have up to three (3) School Improvement Awards to manage.** – The timeline for schools and districts to obligate and liquidate FY19 was extended by the USDE Waiver in March 2020.
 - Districts that were awarded FY19 funds must obligate on or before September 30, 2021 and liquidate on or before December 2021.
 - Districts that were awarded FY20 funds must obligate on or before September 30, 2021 and liquidate on or before December 2021.
 - Districts that were awarded FY21 funds must obligate on or before September 30, 2022 and liquidate on or before December 2022.

The date in December will correspond with the date for fund reimbursement assigned by the MDE Office of School Financial Services. Please check with the Federal Programs Director or Business Manager in your district regarding any remaining balances.

- **Monitoring Implementation of CSI, TSI and ATSI Plans** – This will begin during the 2020-21 school year. Guidance for this process will be shared during a **virtual meeting that will be held on Tuesday, September 29, 2020**. The audience for this virtual meeting should be the principal, members of the school leadership team, the federal programs director, the district level school improvement facilitator, and the superintendent. To register for the virtual meeting, please click the link located on the OSI website.

- **Professional Development Opportunities** – Professional development opportunities will be provided for schools and districts throughout the 2020 – 2021 school year. Topics will include:
 - Disrupting the Opportunity Myth
 - Mississippi High School Redesign
 - The Office of School Improvement Convening (training on a collection of leadership, instructional, and educational practices for school improvement)
 - P-16 Council requirements and implementation
 - The Office of School Improvement supports and requirements for identified schools
 - Identifying and selecting evidence-based resources
 - Monitoring implementation of evidence-based interventions and implementing school plans.

Schools supported by the Office of School Improvement will also receive priority for professional development opportunities that are offered through the Fall 2020 PD Catalog available at <https://www.mdek12.org/OPD>.

Special Education

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3498

Robin Lemonis
Executive Director
rlemonis@mdek12.org

Dr. Margaret Elmer
Bureau Director, District Services & Program Operations
margaret.ellmer@mdek12.org

Dr. Armerita Tell
Bureau Director, Parent Engagement & Support
atell@mdek12.org

Sharon Coon
Office Director, District Data & Technical Assistance Lead
scoon@mdek12.org

Ginger Koestler
Intervention Specialist, Behavior Section 504, & Child Find
gkoestler@mdek12.org

Teresa Laney
Office Director, District Monitoring & Related Services Lead
tlaney@mdek12.org

Bobby Richardson
Office Director, District Fiscal Lead, Contracts, Grants, & Special Projects
brichardson@mdek12.org

Mona Spells Adou
Parent Engagement & Dispute Resolution Specialist
mspells@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Provide technical assistance to support schools and districts as they implement State and Federal regulations to improve student outcomes for children with disabilities and their families
- Communicate and provide guidance to parents of children with disabilities and local school district personnel in the resolution of disputes through formal dispute resolution processes
- Develop and publish instructional and behavioral resources to support and ensure accountability and student achievement in all programs and for all students with disabilities
- Establish and foster a system of school, home, and community resources that provide the physical, emotional, and intellectual support that each student needs to succeed
- Support districts with effective fiscal management practices

Candice Taylor
Early Childhood Instructional
Specialist & 619 Coordinator
cataylor@mdek12.org

What you need to know...

- **Alternate Diploma** – This option shall be offered by districts for incoming ninth graders with significant cognitive disabilities beginning in the year 2018- 2019 and thereafter. Only students identified by their Individualized Education Program Committee as having a significant cognitive disability, as defined by the Testing Students with Disabilities Regulations and State Board Policy Chapter 78, Rule 78.1, may be eligible to earn the Alternate Diploma. For more information on the Alternate Diploma, please refer to Appendix A-10 in the [2020 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards](#).
- **Certificate of Completion** – A Certificate of Completion is **NOT** a high school diploma or an Alternate Diploma, but rather an acknowledgement of the student’s participation in and completion of his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP). For more information about the Certificate of Completion, please refer to Appendix A-11 in the [2020 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards](#).
- **Child Find** – Child Find is the ongoing obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of having a disability/disabilities and are in need of special education and related services as a result of those disabilities.
- **Determination Reports** – The Office of Special Education issues the Special Education Performance Determination Reports annually. These reports can be found at www.mdek12.org/ose/spp-spr. Click on the link labeled “Special Education Performance Determination Report” and select your district file. Your State Lead will be in touch with you to discuss your district’s determination and required actions. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Special Education.
- **Dispute Resolution/Due Process** – The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides options for resolving disputes that allow the parties to continue their work together afterwards—namely, ensuring that a child with a disability has available to him or her a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. These options include the following:
 - IEP facilitation
 - Mediation
 - Formal state complaint
 - Due process hearings
 - Resolution meetings
 - Expedited due process hearings in disciplinary situations
- **Early Childhood Programs** – Special education services are provided by each school district for children with disabilities, beginning at age 3. Some districts also participate in an Early

Learning Collaborative. Children with disabilities are included in these programs as specified in each program's policy. Other districts participate in the Blended Pre-K program. This program uses IDEA funds to provide inclusive Pre-K classrooms in public schools across the state.

- **Educable Child Program** – Per State Board Policy Rule 74.1, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education (OSE) is directed to provide oversight through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and State Statute in the placement and funding of students with disabilities in private school/facilities.
- **Educational Interpreter (EI) Program** – The fundamental role of an educational interpreter is to facilitate communication between Deaf or Hard of Hearing students and hearing persons including, but not limited to administrators, staff, teachers, service providers, parents, and peers within the educational environment. Districts are encouraged to apply for EI funds using the process outlined online at <https://mdek12.org/OSE/funding/special-education-educational-interpreters>.
- **Educational Scholarship Account** – The Equal Opportunity for Students with Special Needs Act (Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-181-1 through 37-181-21) was signed into law during the 2015 session of the Mississippi Legislature and established Education Scholarship Accounts. The Education Scholarship Account (ESA) provides an opportunity for parents of children with disabilities who wish to withdraw their child from the public-school system to use scholarship money to help defray the cost of private school tuition or other specific allowable activities to educate their child.
- **Extended School Year (ESY)** – Extended school year (ESY) is the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities in accordance with their individualized education program (IEP) beyond the normal school year of the local district and at no cost to the parents of the students.
- **Mississippi Comprehensive Automated Performance-Based System (MCAPS)** – MCAPS is an online application system for the Mississippi Department of Education. It houses the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funding applications. The system contains resource information for districts and schools. For more information visit <https://mcaps.mdek12.org>.
- **Monitoring** – Monitoring of district compliance and services to students with disabilities is an ongoing activity that may be completed through district self-assessment, district determination data reports, desk audits or on-site visits. Targeted technical support is provided based on individual district needs.
- **New Special Education Director Mentoring Program** - The Office of Special Education (OSE) provides a unique opportunity to all new special education directors across the state. The OSE has Educators in Residence (EIRs) with extensive experience as administrators in the area of special education. EIRs provide technical support to directors with three years or less experience as a director. Each year the OSE offers a New Director Boot Camp specifically designed for new directors which provides an overview of the role/responsibilities of a special education director. The EIR also provides direct technical support to these individuals throughout the school year. For more information about this program, please contact Alice Hunter at ahunter@mdek12.org and/or Cindy Taylor at ctaylor@mdek12.org.

- **Phonics First** – This comprehensive and highly intensive multisensory training course qualifies teachers to bring Orton-Gillingham instruction into their classrooms. Phonics First transforms beginning, struggling, dyslexic and learning-disabled students into skilled learners through its effective, fun, multisensory approach to reading and spelling. The Office of Special Education is providing this training, free of charge, to teachers across the State. Due to COVID-19, we are offering courses online in either a self-paced or live-stream format. For more information on this program, please contact Teresa Laney at tlaney@mdek12.org.
- **Positive Behavior Specialist Program** – A Positive Behavior Specialist (PBS) is a licensed professional with training and experience in behavior management and positive behavioral interventions in the educational setting. Individuals who may satisfy these requirements include licensed school psychologists, social workers, and counselors. Some teachers with a background in behavioral disorders or emotional disabilities may also qualify. Each district will receive an allocation based on a formula to employ or contract with a Positive Behavior Specialist to implement these requirements. Each district's allocation is calculated based on a percentage of the average daily attendance and the December 1 Child Count with a ratio of one specialist per 1,000 students. Districts are encouraged to apply for funds by using the information found at <https://mdek12.org/OSE/funding/special-education-positive-behavior-specialist>.
- **Related Service Support** – Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists provide critical support for some students with disabilities. The OSE provides technical assistance for these professionals who work in schools regarding best practices, compliance and other support as requested.
- **State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)** – REACH MS supports the Mississippi State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). It was first awarded to the Mississippi Department of Education in 2005, and refunded in 2010 and 2016. The grant is operated by the University of Southern Mississippi's Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Special Education. The grant has two areas of focus: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The purpose of grant is to increase the academic performance in English/Language Arts of Pre-K – 3 students with disabilities through implementation of UDL and support development and expansion of positive learning environments in Mississippi through effective implementation of PBIS within a MTSS framework. This is accomplished through professional development, training, and ongoing technical assistance provided at no cost to schools and districts across the state. For more information about UDL and PBIS, please contact Selina Merrell, Director, by email at selina.merrell@usm.edu or by phone at (601) 325-6958.
- **State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)** – The OSE's SSIP plan is aligned to the strategic goals established by the State Board of Education. This comprehensive, multi-year plan is based on high expectations for students with disabilities and is focused on building the capacity of local districts to implement and scale-up evidence-based practices in reading with a focus on improving third grade reading proficiency. Aligned with other State and Federal initiatives, the SSIP was developed so that resources could be leveraged for maximum impact to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.
- **Section 504** – Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S.

Department of Education (ED). Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance"

The Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Under Section 504, FAPE consists of the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

- **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)** – The MDE has released the [K-12 SEL Competencies](#) for local level use. The overarching purpose of these standards is to address the social and emotional needs of all students to ensure their success in school and in life. SEL skills improve a student's capacity to engage in academic learning and prepares them to meet the college and career readiness standards (CCRS). They further assist school staff with their respective roles in integrating social emotional learning into daily classroom and school experiences of students.
-

Student Assessment

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3052

Dr. Jackie Sampsell
State Assessment Director
jsampsell@mdek12.org

vacant
ACT/ NAEP State Coordinator

Elizabeth Cook
**MAAP Program Coordinator &
Mathematics Content Specialist**
ecook@mdek12.org

Sharon Prestridge
EL Program Coordinator
sprestridge@mdek12.org

Melissa Beck
K-3 Assessment Coordinator
mbeck@mdek12.org

vacant
MAAP-A Coordinator

Michael Martin
Test Security Director
mcmartin@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Collaborate with Mississippi educators to develop items aligned to the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards (CCRS)
- Evaluate student performance using the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) in grades 3 through 8 in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, grades 5 and 8 Science, Algebra I, Biology, English II, and U.S. History
- Ensure all MS students are assessed according to the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) – including English learners and students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD)
- Provide districts with valid and reliable results to guide instruction through data driven decisions

What you need to know...

- **Testing Calendar** – The statewide testing calendar may be found under Links on the Student Assessment webpage. <https://mdek12.org/OSA> > [Testing Calendar](#).
- **Re-testers** – Re-testers are allowed to test during the Fall Test window. These re-testers would be students that did not qualify for a COVID-19 waiver. For more information, see page 15 of Process Standard 14.2 of the summary document found here [https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/documents/MBE/MDE-2020\(6\)/tab-01-sbe statute waivers final.pdf](https://www.mdek12.org/sites/default/files/documents/MBE/MDE-2020(6)/tab-01-sbe statute waivers final.pdf).

- **ACT** – On September 22, 2020, the ACT will be offered for the students who did not get an opportunity to test in spring 2020. Any student who was a junior and enrolled in a Mississippi school districts in March 2020 and did not test on February 25, 2020 is eligible to participate in this administration. The regular ACT spring 2021 administration for current juniors will be held on February 23, March 23, and April 6, 2021.
- **MAAP Science, Biology, and U.S. History Assessment:**
 - **Data Recognition Corporation (DRC)** is the assessment vendor for the Grades 5 and 8 Science, Biology, and U.S. History exams.
 - **Science and Biology** – The Mississippi Academic Assessment Program for Science (MAAP-SCI, grades 5 and 8), and the MAAP End-of-Course Assessment (MAAP - EOC, Biology) will be correlated to the *Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards for Science* beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. Blueprints for the science assessments may be found at <http://www.mdek12.org/OSA/MAAP> > [Science and History Resources](#). Sample assessment items may be found in the same folder.

Additional online sample items can be found in the DRC Online Tools (OTT) site. Students should access the OTTs prior to testing to become familiar with navigating and using the DRC Insight testing system. The OTTs can be accessed using a Google Chrome browser and visiting <https://wbte.drcedirect.com/MS/portals/ms>.

Additional practice items will be released in January 2021.

- **U.S. History** – MAAP - EOC for U.S. History will correlate to the *Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards for the Social Studies* for the 2020-2021 school year. Revised blueprints, for the science assessments, may be found at <http://www.mdek12.org/OSA/MAAP> > [Science and History Resources](#) and by clicking on the folder entitled “**US History - New!**” Sample assessment items may be found in the same folder.

Additional online sample items can be found in the DRC Online Tools (OTT) site. Students should access the OTTs prior to testing to become familiar with navigating and using the DRC Insight testing system. The OTTs can be accessed using a Google Chrome browser and visiting <https://wbte.drcedirect.com/MS/portals/ms>.

Additional practice items will be released in January 2021.

- **MAAP Writing** – Additional sample writing prompts have been released. Click on the links below to access them. Please share this information with teachers in your school/district.
 - [Grade 3](#)
 - [Grade 4](#)
 - [Grade 5](#)
 - [Grade 6](#)
 - [Grade 7](#)
 - [Grade 8](#)
 - [End-of-Course](#)

Technology & Strategic Services (OTSS)

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3487

John Kraman
Chief Information Officer

jkraman@mdek12.org

John Hartley
Director of Infrastructure

jhartley@mdek12.org

Henry Vaughn
Information Security & Data Privacy Officer

hvaughn@mdek12.org

Deborah Donovan
Director of Data Analysis & Reporting

ddonovan@mdek12.org

Sarita Donaldson
Director of Core School Applications

sdonaldson@mdek12.org

Tamala Matthews
Customer Support & Training Manager

Tmatthews@mdek12.org

Lee Bray
State E-Rate Coordinator

lbray@mdek12.org

Debra Hines
Director of Administration and Budget

dhines@mdek12.org

MDE Network Helpdesk

601-359-2837

mdenet@mdek12.org

MDE Applications Helpdesk

mdeapps@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Provide technical assistance to school districts in the form of remote tech support and onsite field engineers
- Build and host online applications for district and state document sharing and collaboration (SharePoint)
- Provide guidance and consultation on networking best practices and security strengthening
- Provide data reporting services for both internal and external MDE stakeholders
- Assist school districts in ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of student data - in its use to improve student outcomes via data driven decisions
- Assist school districts in data submission and quality related to absences, student indicators, course code, incidents, enrollment, withdrawal, etc.
- Provide technical assistance to school districts related to data entry issues with TIMS, ELMS and MSIS
- Provide training and support for school districts reporting demographics, student, personnel, and financial data in MSIS

- Provide training and support for school districts filing, responding and processing E-Rate applications submitted to USAC
- Assist school districts in the E-Rate consortium with internet bandwidth and related issues

What you need to know...

- **SharePoint** – MDE program offices provide a secure location for sharing files with school districts. For example, Special Education Directors can submit sensitive information to the Office of Special Education through this secured portal. For more information on how to gain access to SharePoint, please contact the MDE program office specific to your need.
 - **Information Security and Data Privacy** – Districts, schools, and MDE employees, will be able to find industry standards, best practices, and a growing list of resources that pertain to protecting student data and the privacy of students, teachers, state and district staff.
 - **Security and Privacy Investigations Form** – This form is for the reporting of security incidents related to the privacy, security, and confidentiality of student data. Any security or cyber incident you feel warrants OTSS’ attention may be reported at <https://cspr.mde.k12.ms.us/TakeSurvey.aspx?SurveyID=mlKM68lK#>
 - **Data Request** – Members of the public may submit a Public Records Request at <http://mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting/Request>. In order to provide the most timely and efficient service, a thorough description of the data being requested, the school year and any other “break-outs” (for ex: district, school, gender, race/ethnicity, etc.) are suggested.
 - **E-Rate Program** – E-Rate is a federal program that provides discounts to schools and libraries for purchases of telecommunication services and network equipment/services. The program is governed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and administered by USAC, the Universal Services Corporation. OTSS assists school districts with the E-Rate process from the initial application, implementation and closeout of each year’s application. Training consists of annual roadshows prior to the application process and roundtables to assist in filing for E-Rate reimbursement. For more information visit <https://www.mdek12.org/OTSS/e-rate>.
 - **MDE Network Helpdesk** – Districts can request network support from the MDE. We provide, free of charge, field engineers to assist with network configuration and implementation. Contact the MDE Network Helpdesk by email at mdenet@mdek12.org for assistance.
 - **MDE Applications Helpdesk** – Districts may request assistance with the reporting of data (for ex: schedules, attendance, grades, transportation, discipline, Career and Technical
-

Education, Gifted, Special Education and Textbooks) to meet state and federal requirements at <https://servicedesk.mde.k12.ms.us/> or by email at mdeapps@mdek12.org.

- **The Technology Advisory Committee (TAC)** – TAC is comprised of technology directors, coordinators, and administrators from districts across the state. These individuals serve in an advisory role to this Office. The committee focuses on technology needs, strategic and measurable actions for technology integration, guidelines for technology planning, and collaboration between OTSS and school districts. The committee meets every other month to share ideas and discuss relevant topics. If you are interested in becoming a member, please email dhines@mdek12.org.
 - **Website Feedback** – The new MDE website has a number of new features, including built-in accessibility options. The new website also has a feedback form built into every landing page that allows users to report any issues with the website. The feedback from all submissions will be sent to the MDE Network Helpdesk.
-

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Get in touch with us...

601-359-3077

Website: www.mdek12.org/essa
mssucceeds@mdek12.org

Dr. Nathan Oakley
Chief Academic Officer
ESSA State Lead
noakley@mdek12.org

What we do...

- Engage with stakeholders in the development of Mississippi's response to ESSA
- Coordinate efforts across offices within the Mississippi Department of Education

What you need to know...

- **What is ESSA?** In 2015, Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. The federal education law is primarily focused on historically disadvantaged students. ESSA replaced No Child Left Behind (NCLB).
- **Long-term goals** – Each state has set ambitious, long-term goals and interim benchmarks of student progress based on assessment proficiency, graduation rate, and progress toward English proficiency for English learners. More ambitious goals will be set for groups that are further behind so that significant progress can be made in closing gaps.
- **Accountability** – Mississippi does not plan to make major changes to the current accountability system at this time.
- **Reporting** – ESSA requires disaggregated data be reported on factors such as achievement, graduation rate, assessment participation, discipline rates, advanced coursework access, and similar indicators.
- **School Improvement** – ESSA places the primary responsibility for improving low-performing schools on the school district, with the support of the state.
- **Teacher & Leader Quality** – States and districts must ensure that low-income students and students of color are not taught at disproportionate rates by ineffective, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers.
- **Evidence-Based Programs** – ESSA requires that districts and schools, particularly those identified for Comprehensive or Targeted Support and Improvement, use evidence-based practices. Evidence-based practices must provide a track record of success. ESSA's definition of "evidence-based" includes 4 levels of evidence. The top 3 levels require findings of a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on an experimental study, a quasi-experimental study, or a correlational study. Websites such as the *What Works Clearinghouse* or the *PEW Results First Clearinghouse Database* offer listings of some evidence-based programs.

NEWS RELEASE

September 10, 2020



Quality Counts: Mississippi 2nd Most Improved State in Education

JACKSON, Miss. – For the third consecutive year, Mississippi earned national recognition for its progress in education, climbing to be among the top five states or jurisdictions with the greatest improvement, according to the latest Quality Counts report published in Education Week. Mississippi ranked second among states with the most improved states, excluding the jurisdiction of Washington, D.C. The report examines achievement in school systems from prekindergarten through grade 12 and socioeconomic factors leading to success in adulthood.

Mississippi earned an overall grade of C-minus (70.5 out of 100 points), inching closer to the national average. The nation's overall grade was a C (72.8 out of 100 points).

QUALITY COUNTS MOST IMPROVED

STATE	SCORE / GRADE	CHANGE 2018-2019
District of Columbia	77.8 C+	2.8 ↑
Mississippi	70.5 C-	2.1 ↑
Louisiana	69.9 C-	2.0 ↑
Nevada	68.6 D+	1.7 ↑
South Dakota	74.2 C	1.6 ↑

Source: EdWeek Research Center, 2020
Category: Overall Most Improved States

Mississippi, District of Columbia, South Dakota and Louisiana all saw their overall scores improve. The Quality Counts report is released in three phases based on indicators for opportunities for success, school funding and achievement. In February, Mississippi was recognized for gaining 6.2 points in the Chance-for-Success Index, improving its grade from a D+ in 2008 to a C in 2020. The report stated key advances in family income, parental education levels, parental employment, 4th grade reading, and 8th grade math contributed to the state's success.

Mississippi also made the most progress in the nation on the K-12 Achievement Index from 2019 to 2020. Its score jumped by 5.2 points during that time fueled by increases in the percentage of 4th grade students proficient in math and reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

“This is outstanding national recognition for our teachers and leaders in the state. We have challenged students to meet higher standards of learning, and they are succeeding,” said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. “This is validation that over time, we can change the trajectory of public education in Mississippi and raise expectations for what our students can do.”

In 2019, Mississippi achieved the No. 1 spot in the nation for gains on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), known as the Nation’s Report Card. NAEP measures student proficiency in 4th and 8th grade reading and mathematics, and Mississippi was the only state in the nation to show significant increases in three of the four NAEP subjects. Washington, D.C., was the only jurisdiction to show gains in three of four subjects.

###

NEWS RELEASE

September 16, 2020



Mississippi Leads the Nation in K-12 Progress and College Persistence Among Southern States

JACKSON, Miss. — The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) praised Mississippi for its achievements in education from early childhood through college in its 2020 report on the progress of education in the South.

[Mississippi: A Turning Point](#) details where Mississippi stands in education, highlighting how the effective implementation of education policy has improved student achievement statewide and made Mississippi the leader in the South for college persistence.

SREB report highlights for Mississippi:

- Mississippi is the only state in region in which the first-year persistence rate of first-time, full time students at public, 4-year colleges and universities increased from 2012 to 2017, indicating that more first-time, full-time college students returned to college for a second year.
- The high school graduation rate outpaced the region in growth.
- The average state Pell Grant award exceeded the nation and was the highest average award in the region.
- Fourth graders outpaced the region and nation in gains in reading and math achievement at both the Basic and Proficient levels on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). For the first time, fourth graders in the state outperformed the nation in reading and math achievement on NAEP at the Basic level or above.
- Eighth graders outpaced the region and nation in gains in reading and math achievement at both the Basic and Proficient levels on NAEP.
- The ninth-grade enrollment increase shrank, indicating that more eighth graders are prepared to make transitions to ninth and then 10th grade.
- The Early Learning Collaboratives meet all 10 quality standards for pre-K, according to the National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER). Mississippi is one of only four states that meet all NIEER quality standards.

“The 2020 SREB report shows how Mississippi’s research-based education policies are improving student achievement from pre-K through college,” said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. “I am incredibly proud of all the hardworking students, educators and school leaders who have made Mississippi a national leader for advancing public education.”

SREB works to improve public education through proven policy and practice in 16 southern states including Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

SREB's annual state progress reports evaluate how well states are educating students and them for the workforce. The 2020 report detailed challenges to SREB states' efforts to increase the educational attainment of working-age adults in the South, including the large number who lack the credentials they need for success in the workplace.

According to SREB, rapid advancements in automation and artificial intelligence may increasingly displace adults with low levels of education, transforming some positions while eliminating others. Most new jobs — especially ones that pay well — will require education beyond high school. SREB estimates that by 2030, 18 million workers and their children in the South will be unemployable or stuck in low-wage jobs, and in a perpetual cycle of poverty.

The reports urge southern states to take aggressive action to prepare students and adults for the higher-skilled positions of the future so they can remain employed, earn higher incomes, and support the educational progress of future generations.

###

What Every

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER



NEEDS TO KNOW

