

Q There are other existing mentoring programs in the state. Why do you feel this new initiative is needed? And what is the motivation for doing this now?

A Our state experiences a lack of recognition and visibility for excellence in mentoring. This initiative's goal is to be the central resource center for ensuring and promoting consistency in mentoring across the state. It also focuses on strengthening and supporting existing mentoring programs while promoting the development of new programs. The keys to our success will be the number of mentors we recruit, the number of students we reach and the quality of service we provide.

Q What is the targeted age range?

A It is open to all children, with our focus on at-risk-youth who are at the age where they make many critical life decisions. These are the people who in ten years will be entering the workforce and the guidance we provide them now is critical to their success as adults.

Q Is this a political move?

A No, this is a bi-partisan, collaborative effort of public and private sector leaders uniting to provide better futures for our children.

Q Is there any cost involved?

A There will be a cost, and that is why this public/private partnership is vital. Members of the council will be instrumental in fundraising efforts, which will include identifying grant opportunities that can cover costs of promotion and advertising of the program.

Note: Council members serve with no compensation and the staff person is covered by the Governor's Office.

Q How many mentors do you expect to recruit in one year?

A That specific figure will be determined by the Leadership Council on Mentorship, but we are confident that Mississippians will rise to the challenge that we have put before them to come to the aid of our children.

(please do not give a specific figure)