
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: STATUS OF TEACHER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT
DATE: 5/16/00
CC: BOYD

Pursuant to your directions, I am coordinating Mississippi's Teacher Quality Enhancement grant application on behalf of this office. The grant seeks to promote statewide teacher education reform activities through the linkage of K-12 and higher education institutions and systemic policy and practice changes. I held a grant partners meeting on May 8 with representatives of the Department of Education, the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges, and IHL.

We held a second partners' meeting on May 12 to discuss teacher programs and resources already in operation and to identify weaknesses among these resources. We invited representatives of the Public Education Forum and the Mississippi Economic Council, as well as the chairpersons of the House and Senate education and colleges & universities committees. From this large group, we identified a working group to actually develop the grant proposal.

IHL identified available Hardin Foundation funds to hire a grant writer, Dr. Susan Malone of the University of Southern Mississippi. The working group met with Dr. Malone yesterday. At this point, it appears as if the proposal will focus on pre-service and in-service resources for our prospective and veteran teachers.

With regards to pre-service, the working group has identified a need for an assessment of the current 12 hours of reading curriculum for education majors, as well as for education majors to have educational courses earlier (freshman and sophomore years). The group has discussed requiring applicants for the Critical Needs Teacher Scholarship to take the PRAXIS I, so that those who score low on it may be assigned a mentor throughout college to provide additional help. The group has also discussed ensuring that each university and community college campus have a Learning Plus lab for those education majors who don't pass the PRAXIS, for those Head Start teachers and para-professionals considering an education major, and for non-traditional education majors entering the major from another field.

The in-service piece will focus on an induction program for new teachers, including a mentoring piece. The group has discussed utilizing the personnel at the 6 National Board Certification training sites as mentors for new teachers to encourage their seeking certification. The group has also discussed existing resources that can be enhanced or coordinated for professional development for all teachers.

Dr. Malone will present the grant proposal framework to the partners on May 25. I will continue to keep you apprised of the development of the grant application. Please advise as to any pieces you would like to see included or deleted.