
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: TEACHER QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT
DATE: 6/1/00
CC: BOYD

Pursuant to your directions, I am coordinating Mississippi's Teacher Quality Enhancement grant application on behalf of this office. The grants seek to promote statewide teacher education reform activities through the linkage of K-12 and higher education institutions and systemic policy and practice changes in areas such as, but not limited to:

- Teacher licensing and certification
- State and higher education accountability for high quality teacher preparation
- Improved teaching skills
- Infusion of technology into curriculum and teaching
- Extended mentoring of new teachers

The Teacher Quality Enhancement grant working group has developed a draft of the proposed goals, objectives and activities of Mississippi's grant. The draft proposal has four goals:

1. Develop and implement state policies that strengthen licensing standards.
2. Develop and implement state policies and programs that increase the number of qualified teachers entering the field.
3. Develop policies, clear standards and programs that ensure retention of qualified teachers.
4. Involve all stakeholders in developing a seamless K-16 system that supports growth in student achievement across the state.

I need to advise you of the following policy components of the grant:

Licensure Standards

Staff recommendation: Approve Standards Board Task Force study and Licensure Levels task force study.

- With regards to goal one (licensing standards), the draft proposes that a **Standards Board Task Force study and make recommendations to you concerning the establishment of a professional standards board**, as endorsed by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. This task force

will study existing models in other states, as well as research on the effectiveness of such entities in improving teacher quality and, ultimately, student achievement. If the Task Force recommended the establishment of an independent standards board, the draft proposal anticipates your support of such a board through your legislative agenda.

The Public Education Forum, the Mississippi Association of Educators and the Board of Trustees of IHL have called for the establishment of such a board. Senator Dearing introduced SB 2280 (1998) to establish a Commission on Professional Educators' Standards and Practices, whose 17 members were appointed by the Governor, but the measure died in committee.

- Also with regards to goal one (licensing standards), the draft proposes that **a task force on licensure levels review, revise, and align licensure requirements with Secretary of Education Riley's three-tiered process** to become fully certified. Secretary Riley's approach encompasses an initial license granted after a prospective teacher has passed written and performance-based assessments. This period represents a trial period of induction. A professional license is granted at the end of an induction period after a successful completion of a performance-based assessment conducted by a panel of peers and a supervisor. A voluntary advanced license is granted to teachers who achieve National Board Certification.

The draft proposes a licensure system that incorporates the Professional Standards Board, a new performance-based assessment system for teachers aligned with the new state accountability plans, and this three-tiered licensure approach. This licensure task force would be charged with making recommendations for revision of state licensure requirements and proposing a plan for transition. Any changes to Mississippi's licensure process would require legislative, as well as executive, support, as it would require statutory changes.

P-16

Staff recommendation: The Mississippi Education Partnership (MEP) should not be the governing council for this grant. You should host a statewide summit on K-16 teacher quality.

- The TQE 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. The Mississippi Future Net recommended creating the Mississippi Education Partnership (MEP) to provide strategic leadership in Mississippi for activities that are best served with a P-16 (pre-school through undergraduate) seamless view of public education. The TEQ draft proposes that the Mississippi Educational Partnership's scope be expanded to provide leadership on statewide K-16 issues and to serve as the governing council for this grant.

Mississippi Future Net recommended that the MEP be a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization comprised of representatives of MDE, SBCJC, IHL and the Public

Ed Forum. MEP has not been organized as an official 501(c) (3) at this point. **I do not recommend that the MEP be the governing council for this grant.** This grant should be governed by an advisory council chaired by a representative of this office. The MEP, should it be formalized, could serve on this advisory council.

IHL proposed yesterday that you host a state-wide summit on teacher quality for stakeholders from across the K-16 continuum. We could limit costs associated with such a summit by inviting the participants ourselves or we could offset costs by charging a registration fee. Our office would have to dedicate some hours to coordinate the summit, but we could also rely on the services of the project manger (see below). **Your hosting such a summit would reflect favorably on the grant application as a strong commitment from you to teacher quality.**

Grant Management

Staff recommendation: The project manager should be housed at MDE, with the grant governed by an advisory council chaired by the Governor's Office.

- Most states with successful TQE grant applications have utilized a grant advisory council. After reviewing the organizational structure of such, **I am proposing that the advisory council be comprised of representatives of the following:**

Governor's Office

House & Senate Education and Universities and Colleges Committees

Board of Trustees, Institutions of Higher Learning

IHL teacher education faculty

Private universities' teacher education faculty

2 Arts/science IHL faculty

State Board for Community and Junior Colleges

Department of Education, Certification Specialist

Department of Education, Mississippi Teacher Center

State Board of Education's Teacher Representative

Mississippi Association of School Administrators

Mississippi School Boards Association

Public Education Forum

Mississippi Economic Council

Mississippi Parent-Teacher Association

Mississippi Education Partnership

- **I recommend that the Project Manager be housed at the Department of Education** due to MDE being responsible for a large part of the grant work plan (licensing, induction, retention) and the department's experience with managing and monitoring grants. Likewise, we should designate the State Superintendent of Education as the recipient of funds.