

LEADERSHIP SUMMIT PRIORITIES

WHAT'S BEING DONE NOW?

- 1. All of Mississippi's children and their families, along with educators, business persons, professionals, the media, and communities, will understand and embrace the value of education and training, both for their own personal accomplishment, and to develop a more robust state economy.**

Academic

- As a part of the New Accountability Model, the Office of Instructional Support and Training will be implementing the community involvement and public relations instruments which targets, community group, parent, and business involvement in priority schools. These instruments are available to all schools upon request. Research suggests that the more intensively the community, parents, and businesses are involved in student learning, the more beneficial the effects on student achievement. The effects of the aforementioned types of involvement on student outcomes, other than achievement, include attitude toward school or toward particular subject areas, self-concept, classroom behavior, time spent on task/homework, expectations for one's future, absenteeism, motivation, and retention in school.
- School-to-Careers Division, located in Instructional Support and Training, implements a system of coordination between schools and business to emphasize career awareness, academic achievement and workforce development.
- The Office of Special Education has implemented an Occupational Diploma Program which prepares students with disabilities to be productive members of the workforce.

- 2. All of Mississippi's children will start school ready to learn.**

Academic

The Mississippi Department of Education is committed to providing high quality programming, professional development, and resources designed to enact early childhood services. The Office of Reading, Early Childhood & Language Arts provides the following:

- Publishes and trains on a three- and four-year old comprehensive pre-kindergarten curriculum;
- Operates a Head Start Collaborative Office designed to ensure that public schools blend services with Head Start Centers;
- Provides regional trainings on early childhood care best practices and research based techniques;
- Conducts statewide trainings on the importance of designing quality early childhood services;

- Publishes resources and promotional items dedicated to early childhood and early literacy;
- Financially supports and establishes statewide parent centers that address parenting skills and family literacy issues;
- Collaborates with communities on early childhood, i.e., Early Childhood Task Force, ICCCY and Bridges; and
- IDEA, Office of Special Education, Local School Districts: identify and evaluate from birth and begin serving children with disabilities at three years of age.

Vocational

- The Office of Vocational and Technical Education (OVTE) administers the Future Teachers' Literacy Corps (FTLC) program that allows teacher assistants to assist students K-3 in increasing reading-level preparedness through tutoring. Currently 82 school districts participate in this program. Partnerships are being developed with Head Start directors to include their teacher assistants. These assistants will work beside Head Start teachers in getting pre-school children ready to learn as they enter the public school system. Students are prepared and ready to learn and teacher assistants are earning awards that will assist in furthering their education when studying to become certified teachers. This program is aimed at embracing and enhancing the value of education and training by allowing these assistants to enroll in college classes and pursue a teaching degree or additional training.
- OVTE is also in partnership with the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

3. Mississippi will substantially boost the quality of teaching and learning in all elementary and secondary schools to better prepare more graduates who are ready to compete in the new economy.

Academic

- Teacher preparation via professional development will focus on content and pedagogy in elementary and middle school settings through the Mississippi Academies project and the Middle Grades Summer Institute.
- Licensure add-on requirements at the elementary and middle school levels are being considered as well.
- Professional development is offered regionally covering content and pedagogy in all subject areas.
- Each year the department hosts an Improving Mississippi Schools Conference highlighting best practices and current trends for practicing teachers and administrators.
- Teacher quality and student learning is enhanced by strategies using collaborative work such as curriculum mapping, peer coaching study teams, and student intervention teams.

- A grant program that offers vertical team training to school teams to identify middle school students that may be successful in advanced placement courses will increase the number of students that go on to take higher-level courses. Scholarships target socio-economically disadvantaged students for online advanced placement courses.
- At the elementary level, primary assessments allow for early identification and prescriptive responses to student performance needs.
- The Office of Special Education offers traineeships to teachers on one-year license to pursue coursework toward endorsement in Special Education.
- The Office of Educational Technology will develop an online, searchable clearinghouse of resources and encourage a statewide teacher online community through listservs, chatrooms, and virtual classrooms.
- Making Middle Grades Work Projects in selected Mississippi middle schools are collaborations with SREB to improve all areas of school climate by increasing teacher quality and student performance through implementing a data driven school improvement plan.
- The Office of Instructional Support and Training developed standards for administrators and teachers to boost the quality of education.
- A system of assessment and accountability has been established for the school community to ensure a strong foundation for any student exiting public school.
- Participate in the Mississippi Community College/Jr. College teacher preparation initiative.
- To meet the regulations of NCLB, the Office of Educational Technology has developed a tech plan that includes a strategy to implement Mississippi Technology Standards for all students based on International Society for Technology in Education's National Education Technology Standards for Students.
- Title III requirements under NCLB require a collaborative effort between K-12 and IHL. This can include providing training for pre-service teachers and professional development for veteran teachers, mentoring induction of teachers, and principals.
- MIS – CISCO Training Tech Crews
- Teacher Center – scholarships and training
- Vocational – Tech Prep - High Schools That Work

Quality Educators-Licensure

- Quality of teaching – Ensure that the teacher preparation programs meet NCATE Standards and State Standards to produce highly qualified teachers.

Vocational

- Vocational Student Organizations (VSOs) focus on supporting and enhancing the education curriculum by 1) providing leadership in bringing expertise from specific career areas to education programs through close ties with businesses and local communities, and 2) helping students integrate contextual and academic learning.

- VSOs also provide a framework to connect education and careers, motivate students, build education and business partnerships, participate in career guidance and counseling, encourage higher-level academics, and build interpersonal and employability skills of students. The organizations also motivate youth to become better students, productive citizens and community leaders.
- The Tech Prep Office collaborates with the Offices of Curriculum Instruction, Student Assessment, Guidance and Counseling and Educational Technology to create teacher training modules in mathematics, science and language arts. This collaboration continues to assist teachers in understanding how the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, Subject Area Tests, Work Keys, ACT/SAT, and the use of technology in the classroom are linked to raise student achievement. Training workshops are offered regionally across the state during June and July each year for newly hired Pre-Algebra/Algebra, Geometry, Biology I-II, Chemistry, English I-IV, and all occupational and non-occupational vocational teachers at Tech Prep sites.
- These workshops are lead by outstanding trainers who are classroom teachers that are endorsed by local district administrators and approved by the Tech Prep Office. The Tech Prep subject area workshop agendas are focused on providing clear explanations of the following topics:

Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks,
 Application of SCANS and Workplace Skills,
 Teacher Advisor Program,
 Tech Prep Subject Area Training Modules,
 Subject Area Tests,
 Rubrics for Writing,
 Cooperative Learning,
 Applied Strategies,
 Learning Styles/Multiple Intelligence,
 Use of Applied Lesson Plan,
 Authentic Assessment,
 Curriculum Integration,
 Creating and Implementing Integrated Lessons,
 Intervention Guides, and
 Tech Prep Technical Assistance Onsite Visits.

- The Mississippi Tech Prep Initiative prepares young people for the careers of tomorrow. The Initiative is based on principles of integration of academic and vocational education and strong applied teaching strategies. By combining innovative teaching methods and high-tech equipment, challenging, exciting classrooms have emerged. These programs are Career Discovery at the seventh grade, Computer Discovery at the eighth grade, and Technology Discovery at the ninth grade level. To be certified to teach any of these three courses, teachers must attend Discovery Methods Courses provided through Mississippi State University to earn an endorsement that is added to their

Mississippi Teachers License. Qualified Discovery teachers are employed by the university to provide these endorsement courses on a semester basis. MDE program supervisors have approved the training format and activities used by the trainers.

4. Mississippi will increase high school graduation rates and college participation and graduation rates at all colleges and universities.

Academic

- The Office of Curriculum and Instruction addresses dropout prevention and seeks to improve graduation rates through early intervention and preparation through an aligned state curriculum and assessment system.
- Student achievement and growth is assessed at all grade clusters in the core subject areas. Benchmark grades are established and intervention teams prescribe strategies to assist students in academic performance.
- Within the regular educational setting, programs to address dropout and graduation rates include: credit recovery programs, Jobs for Mississippi Graduates, Support Our Students, and Talent Search. Compensatory courses are designed to provide remediation at the middle and secondary level.
- In the Alternative School setting, every district provides additional opportunities to remain in school to students who were not successful in a traditional school setting. The GED option plan is provided in many of the alternative school settings.
- In order to assist students in being better prepared for post secondary coursework, early identification of student achievement and placement opportunities in advanced level classes (AP) are offered through online scholarships and teacher training.
- Gifted and talented programs identify and serve students in four areas: Intellectually Gifted, Academically Gifted, Artistically Gifted, and Creatively Gifted.
- Collaborations with the Institutes of Higher Learning in teacher pre-service efforts help to better prepare teachers to meet the needs of students in matriculating through grades K-20.
- The P-20 initiative is a collaborative effort with community colleges and universities to provide an aligned curriculum, teacher training, and system of seamless academic delivery for students.
- GEAR UP is a collaborative effort with Institutes of Higher Learning, State Board of Community and Junior Colleges, and Mississippi Department of Education to access funding to attend post-secondary institutions and prepare students for undergraduate programs.
- A newly implemented MSIS student database will allow for better tracking to assist in dropout prevention.
- The Office of Curriculum and Instruction, in its efforts to provide information to parents and students on the correlation between earning potential and educational success, disseminates “Student Expectations – Level 9 – 12.

- The Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education through its transition training arm is working with LEAs to provide all disabled students with education and training to prepare them for increased post-school employment opportunities.
- The Office of Special Education offered transition grants to LEAs to support the identification and/or the development of partnerships to participate in the design, development and administration of the following:
 - School-based learning experiences to expose students to an array of career opportunities that facilitate the selection of career opportunities based on each individual student's interests, goals and abilities; and
 - Work-based learning, such as work experience, job training, job shadowing, and workplace mentoring.
- LEAs are encouraged to develop labor market analysis and planning strategies to involve their local industry sectors and collaborate with community-based organizations.
- Through the Office of School-to-Careers, programs have been developed and implemented with the goals of:
 - Identifying students who are most at risk of dropping out of school and preparing them for meaningful career-oriented jobs; matching students with community job opportunities and providing long-term follow-up to facilitate their successful transition from school to work; and
 - Providing classroom instruction and work based learning opportunities to high school seniors, which will enhance their career awareness, academic achievement, confidence, and work readiness.
- The Office of Special Education will implement revised policies and procedures on July 1, 2003, that will provide early identification of students with special needs and will require interventions and programming to meet those special educational needs.

5. Mississippi will increase participation in adult lifelong learning, worker training, and professional development activities.

Academic

- Through the Individualized Education Program training and monitoring process the MDE is urging districts to develop and strengthen linkages with governmental agencies and other organizations that provide services and instruction to adults. All of the training opportunities offered by the Office of Special Education are open to the public and community members are welcome to attend any of the trainings.
- Academic Education and Vocational collaborations – Tech Prep, CHOICES, vocational courses in high school;
- Online learning – professional development for teachers;
- Professional development offering accumulation of CEU, SEMI, or college credits to advance degree;
- Financially supports and establishes statewide parent centers that address parenting skills and family literacy issues; and

- Host the annual Improving Mississippi Schools Conference and the Reaching for Results and Ideas That Work Conference designed to educate the public on issues related to Mississippi educational system.
- The Division of Parent Outreach in the Office of Special Education offers trainings on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and other special education issues. The trainings are geared for parents, but anyone within the community is welcome. Teachers, administrators, and special education supervisors often attend trainings. The parent trainings that we offer are as follows:
 - Overview of IDEA - discussion of the six principles of IDEA;
 - IDEA In Depth - Discusses everything parents should know about IDEA;
 - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973- Discusses disability discrimination;
 - Individualized Education Program – Discusses how to write IEPs and the IEP Process;
 - Assistive Technology - Discusses what it is...how it works... etc.; and
 - Parent District Relationships - Discusses how to have successful collaboration between parents and the school districts
- The Even Start Family Literacy Initiative provides opportunities for parents to be involved in lifelong learning activities. GED preparation and other literacy and parenting skills training opportunities are provided through this program. Additionally, Title I activities for parents include professional development sessions on a variety of topics.
- Our continued work in the Office of Educator Licensure will ensure that teacher coursework is reflective of what the new federal legislation requires.

Quality Educators-Licensure

- Educators – renewal requirements for licensure

Vocational

- The OVTE Bureau of Vocational Instructional Development and Student Organizations provides occupational training through long-term vocational and technical programs in the secondary schools and community/junior colleges.
- This office/bureau provides the following services to schools that offer vocational and technical courses and programs:
 - Technical assistance visits to LEAs for program improvement,
 - Monitoring visits to verify program performance,
 - Approval of equipment for purchase with state and federal vocational funds,
 - Development and revision of statewide curricula frameworks,
 - Sponsorship of a comprehensive professional development program for instructors and administrators,

Technical assistance to LEAs in developing, implementing, and maintaining quality programs,
Implementation of new programs and new program areas, and
Equipment management.

- The OVTE works to increase Adult life-long learning, worker-training, and professional development activities by establishing partnerships with business and industry. These partnerships provide us with assistance that will help with our Work-Based Learning Program at the post-secondary level. In April, May, and October of 2002, MDE (in partnership with the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation) had 48 program area instructors certified or re-certified to teach the core curriculum known as the “Wheels of Learning” (on-going). One hundred and thirty-eight (138) computers and printers were purchased to give the Wheels of Learning instructors the ability to share information with MDE and district to district. These instructors are also able to access listserve as well as blackboard courses. Training is ongoing with instructors through the partnership of MDE and the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation.
- OVTE provides Short Term Adult Education training for and with outside agencies. The program also provides training to secondary and post-secondary programs (on going).
- OVTE also provides training for new Special Populations coordinators on implementing the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1998. Program Specialists work with Special Education Program Specialists, local districts, and the Bureau of Compliance and Reporting to coordinate this training.
- OVTE works closely with industry to keep students updated on technology and trends in industry. In March 2002, the Work-Based Learning staff and select Work-Based Learning Coordinators participated in a Career Fair. The purpose of this fair was to promote job opportunities and benefits offered by the construction industry. All construction fair events target at-risk students and students who will enter the work force, as well as those who are college bound. As many as 500 students participated in this activity.
- Each year, as required by the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1998, a State-Wide Non-Traditional Conference is held to provide students with activities that will provide them with life-long learning, worker training, and hands-on experience from professional workers in their chosen non-traditional profession. OVTE works to place non-traditional students, as well as traditional students, in contact with the work force and updated technology.

6. Mississippi will increase its support for university-based research and development, and the higher education community will redouble its effort to address state and community economic needs, and to prepare students for careers in the new economy.

Academic

- The Office of Curriculum and Instruction works collaboratively with universities in designing professional development and uses community colleges and universities as sites for MDE regional training.
- The use of scientifically-based programs in math and reading is being addressed, by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction and the Office of Reading/Early Childhood/Language Arts, to meet the requirements of NCLB.
- Work collaboratively with the Mississippi Economic Council, Jumpstart (Personal Finance Education), Mississippi Forestry Commission, Mississippi Bar Association, and Schools to Careers. The additional curriculum offerings available through this office are: Personal Finance, Computations in Business, Survey of Math Topics, Economics, Career Discovery, and AP Economics.
- The Office of Special Education is broadening its efforts to involve the institutions of higher learning in our goal of providing quality instruction to parents and students in the State of Mississippi. Through the implementation of the Mississippi Occupational Diploma an avenue has been created to prepare certificate track special education students to enter into the job market. This option will provide for meaningful inclusion of students with disabilities in the community and the workplace, thereby achieving increased independence, citizenship, and post-school employment.
- The Office of Special Education collaborates with the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) and in an effort to form collaborative partnerships to address economic needs both at the local and state levels through the Special Education Advisory Committee which has IHL representation. The focus of the collaborative partnership addresses the provision and facilitation of educational opportunities and activities that foster adult lifelong learning, worker training and professional development to prepare students for careers in the near and distant future.
- The Office of School-to-Careers (STC) will continue efforts with IHL, and local partnerships in accomplishing the goals set forth. The vision of the Mississippi STC initiative will include the active and vital participation of students, parents, businesses, educators, and labor and community leaders; effective and well coordinated school-based and work-based learning activities; the integration of academic and vocational education; the development of linkages between secondary and post secondary education; student participation in STC activities on a voluntary basis; participation in STC activities that is available to all students; giving students and parents information about education and career choices that enable them to make wise education and training choices; and STC activities that are individualized for participating students. Results of the STC initiative will show that all students will have the opportunity to participate in school-based and work-based opportunities and connecting activities; have the opportunity to develop a career strategy; have the opportunity to be introduced to a personally fulfilling career; minimally attain a high school diploma or its equivalent; and have the opportunity to complete post secondary education at an appropriate

- level. The aforementioned statements are apart of our continued work in preparing students for careers in the new economy.
- A collaborative effort with the IHLs in Mississippi is needed to build capacity in communities for establishing and maintaining a sound economic base. MDE is a partner with IHLs on a P-20 initiative and will continue to work with the IHLs to develop action research in relation to school improvement and preparing students for the work force.
 - Teacher Licensure: Pre-Service Programs

Vocational

- A strong counseling component is part of the Mississippi Tech Prep Initiative's foundation. It is designed to assist students in making realistic career plans. Discovery courses are designed to enable students to make wise and meaningful occupational and educational choices for their future. With this foundation, students can move into Mississippi's cutting-edge secondary occupational or academic programs and advance from that level to post-secondary education or to employment.
- Mississippi's Comprehensive Career Planning/Counseling Program uses three major areas in its approach to career and educational planning. The three components are as follows: Career Center, Mississippi Career/Educational Plan, and the Teacher/Advisor Program. The Career Center is the resource unit available to all students, school staff and the community. The Mississippi Career/Educational Plan is the tool used to record and update individual career and educational goals throughout each year. The Teacher/Advisor Program is the vehicle through which these career materials are distributed, advisement is given, and plans are made.