



District of Innovation Application Packet

Submit Application by
December 3, 2018 to

Dr. Dana M Bullard

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District of Innovation Application

District Name: Oxford School District

Contact person/Title: Bradley Roberson, Assistant Superintendent

Street Address: 224 Bramlett Blvd

City Name: Oxford

Zip Code: 38655

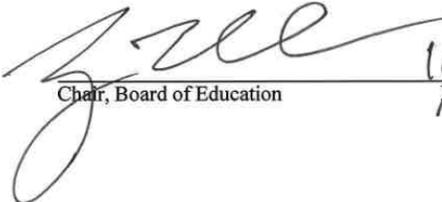
Phone Number: 662-234-3541

Date of Application: 11/27/2018

DISTRICT ASSURANCES

- Applicant assures that its application does not contain any request to waive the following Mississippi Revised Statutes or Mississippi Administrative Regulations:
 - a. ensure the same health, safety, civil rights, and disability rights requirements as are applied to all public schools;
 - b. ensure students meet compulsory attendance requirements under Sections 37-13-91 and 37-13-92;
 - c. ensure that high school course offerings meet or exceed the minimum required under Sections 37-16-7 and 37-3-49 for high school graduation or meet earlier graduation requirements that may be enacted by the Mississippi Legislature;
 - d. ensure the student performance standards meet or exceed those adopted by the State Board of Education as required by Sections 37-3-49, 37-16-3, and 37-17-6, including compliance with the statewide assessment system specified in Chapter 16, Title 37, Mississippi Code of 1972;
 - e. adhere to the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements as are applied under Section 7-7-211(e);
 - f. require state and criminal background checks for staff and volunteers as required of all public school employees and volunteers and specified in Section 37-9-17;
 - g. comply with open records and open meeting requirements under Sections 25-41-1 et seq. and 25-61-1 et seq;
 - h. comply with purchasing requirements and limitations under Chapter 39, Title 37, Mississippi Code of 1972;
 - i. provide overall instructional time that is equivalent to or greater than that required under Sections 37-1-11 and 37-13-67, but which may include on-site instruction, distance learning, online courses, and work-based learning on nontraditional school days or hours; and
 - j. provide data to the department as deemed necessary to generate school and district reports.


Superintendent _____ Date _____


Chair, Board of Education _____ Date 11/29/2018

Innovative Plan Component #1: Innovative Plan and Design

School Name	Innovation Location	Facilities to be Used
Oxford High School	101 Charger Loop	OHS Campus
Oxford Middle School	222 Bramlett Blvd	OMS Campus
Oxford Intermediate School	501 Martin Luther King Drive	OIS Campus
Della Davidson Elementary School	209 Commonwealth Blvd	Della Davidson Campus
Oxford Elementary School	1637 Hwy. 30	Oxford Elementary Campus
Bramlett Elementary School	225 Bramlett Blvd	Bramlett Elementary Campus

**Note to Applicant: Add more rows as needed*

Describe the proposed innovative model.

Oxford School District: Oxford School District is in the early stages of designing a model of continuous improvement for all Oxford schools. A partnership with the University of Mississippi and the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching solidified the idea that we needed a systematic approach to improvement for our school stakeholders. Oxford School District has long operated as a system of schools instead of a school system. As a result, problems that hinder student academic performance have been left unattended. As a part of the continuous improvement model, all Oxford School District personnel will be trained on utilizing improvement science principles to solve problems in education that are both unique to the Oxford School District as well as shared with other educational institutions across the country. Education is often seen as an entity that relies on the “next best thing” to solve problems. The implementation of the improvement science methodology of understanding the system, identifying root causes of educational issues, and then testing possible change agents in 45-day plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycles provides practitioners the opportunity to be involved in the improvement work. It is the goal of the Oxford School District to spread and scale solutions to educational issues to other schools and districts across the state of Mississippi once change agents are identified and proven by the improvement science model.

Since adopting the industrialized model of educating students, school calendars have reflected time as the constant in the learning equation while student learning remained the variable. Research is clear that all students learn at different rates. In order to meet the needs of ALL students, districts must provide adequate time for students to master content as well as eliminate long continuous stretches where student learning is not taking place. As a result, the Oxford School District proposes to move from a traditional school calendar to an academic calendar divided into quarters that allows 3 week intercessions during the school year and no more than 6 weeks of time between student learning opportunities during the summer months. Students not meeting academic standards will be provided academic supports by Oxford School District teachers during the intercessions. Such a model will provide more one-on-one learning opportunities for struggling learners.

It is the belief of the Oxford School District staff that all students deserve a personalized learning experience and therefore, we must provide an educational pathway that best meets their individual needs. As a result, the Oxford School District seeks to add educational pathways for OSD students that include but are not limited to Middle College and Career Academies, while maintaining a traditional pathway that consists of a guaranteed and viable curriculum comprised of rigorous standards and a robust advanced placement program.

Oxford High School Middle College: The Oxford High School Middle College Program is a robust dual credit/dual enrollment program managed by the Oxford School District and Northwest Community College that offers high school students a large choice of dual credit and dual enrollment classes. Upperclassmen (11th and 12th graders) are encouraged to take as many DC/DE classes in a liberal-arts, pre-IHL program or a career-oriented program of study as possible. Juniors will take dual enrollment/dual credit courses on the Oxford High School campus as well as Northwest Community College. The following year, as Oxford High School seniors, middle college students will attend a greater portion of their day on the Northwest Community College Campus under the guidance of the Oxford School District Middle College Principal. Students will also enroll in courses of interest (fine arts, athletics, CTE courses, etc.) at Oxford High School. Transportation to and from Northwest Community College will be provided by the Oxford School District. These students will be supported by a college and career counselor provided by the Oxford School District and Northwest Community College to ensure they are meeting college academic expectations and the high school graduation requirements of the Mississippi Department of Education. As a part of the Middle College Program, students will participate in internships with local business and industry, attend college visits, and participate in other college and career related activities organized by the Middle College Principal during the intercessions afforded by the modified district calendar. Middle College students have the opportunity to earn an Associate's Degree while in high school. At a minimum, all members of the cohort should graduate from high school meeting the ACT or SAT Mississippi standards for admission to college without remediation and earn college credits while in high school.

Oxford High School Career Academies: As a result of the Oxford School District Capital Improvement Plan, Oxford High School will add at least five career technical education courses (in addition to the two programs added this year) in 2021-22. OSD also has a partnership with the Lafayette School of Applied Technology that provides career technical education programs such as automotive service technology, construction/carpentry, health science, metal fabrication, and programming fundamentals. Oxford School District would like to pursue creating multiple career academy pathways due to the addition of the CTE courses and the partnership with the Lafayette County School District. Oxford High School Career Academies will consist 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 academies deliver 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. A key element for career academies to succeed is bringing in resources from outside the high school to improve student motivation and achievement. The Oxford School District CTE Director will establish partnerships with employers, the community and local colleges to achieve this goal.

Explain how the innovative program will differ from a traditional school model and what makes the proposed plan innovative.

Oxford School District Model of Continuous Improvement

It has long been the practice of educational institutions to solve problems from the top down in which those in higher ranking positions who are making the decisions are not the individuals experiencing the problems first hand. The improvement science methodology is the opposite of a “top down approach.” Improvement science principles attempt to solve problems beginning with the practitioners’ point of view. That methodology alone is innovative in and of itself. The Oxford School District will utilize professional development days to train all staff members on improvement science principles. The goal will be to establish networked improvement communities based on problems of practice identified by staff members, parents, and students. OSD staff members will have the opportunity to choose and participate in a networked improvement community based on their own personal passions. OSD staff members will have the ability to work across grade levels with members from other schools to solve problems they are passionate about that obstruct the academic performance of Oxford School District students. Once change agents are identified by networked improvement communities, 45 day PDSA cycles will be implemented to test the change agents. If the change agent shows statistical improvement, it will be scaled to other schools across the district.

Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model

The Oxford School District has a very diverse population of students. As a result, we have had one of the largest achievement gaps in the state of Mississippi for more than 10 years. Simply put, we are not meeting the needs of all of our students. It’s reality that some students from our district are not planning to attend college. For some, it may be a matter of career choice, but for others it may be due to lack of financial resources. The Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model is innovative due to its ability to give ALL students the opportunity to choose the educational pathway that best meets their educational needs and plans after high school. Whether a student desires a robust advanced placement program, additional support to obtain a college degree, or career technical skills to obtain certification for the workforce, ALL needs for ALL students will be met by the “pathway model.” This model will give Oxford School District students the opportunity to take more college courses (middle college model), advanced placement courses, and career technical courses (career academies) than a traditional education system. At the very least, students participating in the Oxford High School Middle College Program will graduate from Oxford High School without the need to take remedial courses once enrolled in college. The majority of students enrolled in the middle college program will obtain an associate’s degree before leaving high school. In summary, the “pathway model” will allow Oxford School District to offer an innovative, college and career focused approach to all Oxford School District students.

Oxford School District Modified Calendar

Research suggests that children learn best when instruction is continuous. A prolonged summer intersession breaks the rhythm of learning; therefore, teachers must spend significant amounts of time remediating students on previously taught content when they return to school the following school year. A modified school calendar that divides the school year into quarters of equal length with intersessions of similar length would greatly increase student retention while giving additional time to remediate students in need of academic support.

Students in the Oxford School District will attend nine weeks of school and then have a three-week intersession in October. Students and staff will continue to have the traditional week of vacation at Thanksgiving and two weeks during Christmas break. At the end of the third nine weeks in March, students and staff will again have a three-week intersession and return to school at the beginning of April to start the final grading period of the school year. Although students will attend the required 180 days of school, the shift in timing will allow for more days of engaged learning.

The new academic calendar will provide two, three-week intersessions during the months of October and March which will allow the district to offer academic support to students that are not meeting grade-level benchmarks. It will allow students to attend an intensive tutoring program from 8:00 – 1:00 Monday – Thursday the first two weeks of the three-week intersession period. The district will provide transportation, breakfast, and lunch for each child attending the intersession tutoring. The district will also implement the extended school year model the first two weeks after school ends for students not meeting grade level standards to receive additional academic support.

Explain how the innovative program is designed to impact student learning and how it will equip students with college- and career-readiness skills.

Oxford School District Model of Continuous Improvement

The implementation of the improvement science methodology stands to have the greatest impact on student achievement in the Oxford School District. Instead of taking the “solutionitis” approach to solving problems regarding student performance by throwing the “next best program” on the market at our students, practicing improvement science principles will address the root causes of such issues. Also, as a result, the process will render much more targeted interventions (change agents) to be tested by OSD students themselves to see if desired results are obtained. Anytime an organization can identify student specific issues and implement targeted interventions, academic performance will improve. A secondary favorable outcome will be the buy-in of the Oxford School District staff as a result of having the opportunity to implement solutions at the most fundamental level rather than being forced to implement solutions pushed down from district or school level officials.

Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model

The Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model differentiates the educational system to meet the needs of all students in the Oxford School District. Through the “pathway design,” Oxford School District students will take a more robust set of college level or career technical courses to prepare them for their post-secondary education and/or the workforce. As a result of rigorous, targeted college/career coursework, it is anticipated that ACT scores will continue to rise. Students will also enroll in college without having to take remedial courses upon program entry. The pathway model also provides additional academic and financial support to students who are not afforded such assistance with traditional educational systems.

Describe extracurricular, exploratory, co-curricular, and experiential activities that are planned.

As part of the Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model, students will:

- Visit Mississippi colleges as cohort groups throughout the school year
- Serve as interns for local businesses based on career pathway choice
- Visit local industries
- Participate in job shadowing opportunities
- Participate in mock job interviews

Explain the vision or broad goals for the school. If the proposed innovation is located at multiple schools within the district, explain how the innovation supports a larger vision or goal.

The Oxford School District places an emphasis on educating the whole child. The job market today demands graduates that not only possess content knowledge, but also have the capacity to apply learned content as well as have the characteristics that are desired in a model employee. As a result, the Oxford School District defines its goals in terms of disciplinary and transdisciplinary targets.

Disciplinary Goals

It is the mission of the Oxford School District to challenge every student to reach his or her maximum potential thereby developing highly educated, responsible, college and career ready citizens who will take an active role in society. In order to achieve our mission, we have established the goals identified in the Oxford School District “95 in 5” plan. The goals are outlined in the image below.



95% graduation rate

95% proficiency on state assessments

95th percentile in growth on NWEA student benchmark assessments

95% of seniors enrolled in advanced placement, dual credit, or career technical courses

95% of students enrolled in college are eligible to take credit-bearing courses as freshmen.

Transdisciplinary Goals

The school board recently approved the Oxford School District Portrait of a Graduate (the only one in the state of Mississippi) which outlines the qualities the members of the Oxford community expect to see in a graduate from the Oxford School District. The traits were developed by a team of forty-eight community members that included Oxford High School students and teachers, parents of OSD students, University of Mississippi officials and professors, local business owners, pastors, and other community members. The Oxford community expects OSD graduates to be:



The Oxford School District Curriculum & Instruction Department has constructed a curriculum team to develop transdisciplinary goals and cornerstone performance tasks for grades Pre-K - 12 to measure each Portrait of a Graduate trait. The goals of the OSD Portrait of a Graduate symbolize what is important to the Oxford Community. The District of Innovation distinction will provide the Oxford School District with the necessary flexibility to meet the expectations of our Oxford stakeholders.

Innovative Plan Component #2: Accountability, Effectiveness, and Performance Targets

Identify the annual student and school performance targets for year one and provide estimates for the following four years of the plan.

The Oxford School District long term student performance goals are outlined in our “95 in 5” plan. The goals are as follows:



95% graduation rate

95% proficiency on state assessments

95th percentile in growth on NWEA student benchmark assessments

95% of seniors enrolled in advanced placement, dual credit, or career technical courses

95% of students enrolled in college are eligible to take credit-bearing courses as freshmen.

Annual school level goals are determined by taking current student achievement data (state assessment scores, graduation rate, growth percentiles, etc.) and dividing the growth needed to achieve “95 in 5” status in five years. For example, ELA proficiency at Oxford High School according to state assessments is currently 68%. In order for Oxford High School to reach “95 in 5” status, the proficiency rate on ELA state assessments must increase by 5.4% each year. All goals at all Oxford School District schools are calculated using the above described methodology.

Describe how and when the district will monitor and report interim achievement and progress during the school year to the district and MDE.

As a component of our strategic plan, all Oxford School District schools and departments will have a report card that targets district goals (which will include “95 in 5” as well as the Portrait of a Graduate). School and department report cards will be reported to the Oxford School District Board and the Mississippi Department of Education quarterly (months April, July, October, and January). Report updates can also be given upon request.

Describe other measures of school performance that will be used to monitor student achievement.

Data Source	Rationale for Selection of Data Source	Expected Outcomes
Naviance	Provides college enrollment data specific to Oxford School District students	Increase college enrollment of underrepresented populations by 10%
PowerSchool	Oxford School District Student Information System	All graduating seniors will have at least 12 college credit hours
PowerSchool	Oxford School District Student Information System	Increase the number of students taking career technical courses by 15%
CPAS and WorkKeys	Career technical education assessments	Increase the number of students earning industry recognized certifications by 10%
ACT	Provides information regarding student college and career readiness	Increase the number of students considered college and career ready by 10% as measured by ACT benchmarks

**Note to applicant: Add more rows as needed.*

Innovative Plan Component #3: Students

School Name	Total Number of Students by Grade Band/Level			Total Number of Students in Special Populations Group			
	Elem:	Middle:	High:	SES:	Race/Ethnicity:	Gender:	Disability:
Oxford School District	2466	653	1220	1841	African American: 1445 Caucasian: 2365 Asian: 155 Hispanic: 251 Other: 123	Male: 2238 Female: 2101	469

**Note to applicant: Add more rows as needed.*

If the innovation involves a cohort of students describe the process by which students will be selected for and admitted to the program, including any description of a target population.

Oxford High School Middle College

Oxford High School students will self-select to participate in the Oxford High School Middle College. *OHSMC* will be an extension of Oxford High School.

Oxford High School Career Academies

Oxford High School Career Academies will be established based on student interest and local industry. The Oxford School District uses the Naviance platform to begin college and career exploration as early as 5th grade. Some of the activities and tasks included in the college and career exploration of OSD students are outlined below:

- Exploring Career Clusters
- Strengths Explorer Survey
- Learning Style Inventory
- Career Cluster Finder Tool
- High School Transitions Survey
- College Search
- Gallup's Strength Explore Assessment
- Construct a Resume

Once specific career academies are identified, all students will have the opportunity to select an academy of interest. Students will have the flexibility to change career academy pathways if the need arises.

Describe how the innovation will impact student achievement.

Oxford School District Model of Continuous Improvement

The implementation of the improvement science methodology stands to have the greatest impact on student achievement in the Oxford School District. Instead of taking the “solutionitis” approach to solving problems regarding student performance by throwing the “next best program” on the market at our students, practicing improvement science principles will address the root causes of issues identified by Oxford School District practitioners. The process will result in much more targeted interventions (change agents) to be tested by OSD students themselves to see if desired results are obtained. Anytime an organization can identify root causes of student academic performance and implement targeted interventions, student achievement will improve. A secondary favorable outcome will be the buy-in of the Oxford School District staff as a result of having the opportunity to implement solutions at the most fundamental level rather than being forced to implement solutions pushed down from district or school level officials.

Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model

Because the Oxford School District has a very diverse population of students, our current education model does not offer the opportunities needed to meet the needs of all kids. By adding a multitude of educational pathways, Oxford School District students will have a much more personalized learning experience that meets their individual needs. The personalized learning pathways will lead to added relevance to the curriculum which is vital to improving student achievement.

Oxford School District Modified Calendar

A modified school calendar that divides the school year into quarters of equal length with intersessions of similar length would greatly increase student retention while giving additional time to remediate students in need of academic support. As a result of increasing student retention and adding additional time to provide support to struggling learners, the expectation is for student proficiency rates to rise as well as an increase in student growth from one academic year to the next.

Describe how the program will address student achievement gaps.

Oxford School District Continuous Improvement

The Oxford School District Continuous Improvement Cycle will allow practitioners to work in networked improvement communities to identify root causes of student academic deficiencies specific to Oxford School District students and test possible change agents to address the concerns. It is expected that teachers working with other practitioners within a networked improvement community will yield interventions specific to Oxford students that will increase student academic achievement therefore shrinking the Oxford School District achievement gap.

Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model

In recent years, Oxford School District has had the largest achievement gap in the state among identified subgroups. While we have seen improvements over the last three years, the gap is still significant. While working to identify the factors that contribute to the achievement gap, it became evident that we needed to shift our focus to the opportunity gaps that exist between different subgroups of our students. The Oxford School District Educational Pathways Model attempts to eliminate barriers that prevent students of identified subgroups from receiving the educational opportunities they both need and deserve. As a result, we expect proficiency gaps to continue to decrease while increasing college enrollment among underrepresented populations of students.

Oxford School District Modified Calendar

The modified academic calendar will provide two, three-week intersessions during the months of October and March which will allow the district to offer academic support to students who are not meeting grade-level benchmarks. It will allow students to attend an intensive tutoring program from 8:00 – 1:00, Monday – Thursday that personalizes the learning experience for struggling learners. The targeted learning experience in a small environment is expected to increase student proficiency and growth as well as student retention of knowledge.

Innovative Plan Component #4: Funding

Describe the sources of funds to be used for the proposed innovative program.

Funds for implementation of the Oxford School District innovation initiatives will come from district and federal funds.

Attach a detailed three-year budget project and address sustainability for years four and five. Please address costs and plans for projected costs (personnel, transportation, meals, instructional materials, technology, facilities, professional development, etc.).

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
CTE Director	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
AP Testing Materials	\$55,000.00	\$55,000.00	\$55,000.00	\$55,000.00	\$55,000.00
Transportation to campus (NW or Ole Miss)	\$30,177.00 per year				
CTE classroom instructors	\$350,000.00	\$350,000.00	\$350,000.00	\$350,000.00	\$350,000.00
CPAS	no cost (state contracted)				
Dual enrollment costs for Middle College Students	\$50,000 (1000 units of DC)				
CTE Class materials	will not be available until specific CTE classes are identified	will not be available until specific CTE classes are identified	will not be available until specific CTE classes are identified	will not be available until specific CTE classes are identified	will not be available until specific CTE classes are identified
Technology	no additional cost due to the district already providing all students with a Mac Book Air	no additional cost due to the district already providing all students with a Mac Book Air	no additional cost due to the district already providing all students with a Mac Book Air	no additional cost due to the district already providing all students with a Mac Book Air	no additional cost due to the district already providing all students with a Mac Book Air
Professional Development	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00	\$22,000.00

Innovative Plan Component #5: Staffing

Position Title	Number of Positions	Role of Position	Required Qualifications for the Position
Career Academy Director and Middle College Principal	1	Serve as the principal for middle college and the director of OSD career academies	Career Technical Education Administrator license & licensed school administrator
CTE instructors for OSD Career Academies	5	Teach CTE courses associated with the 5 career pathways chosen by OSD students and local industry	Experts in the desired career technical field
College and Career Counselor	1	Guide middle college students in transitioning to college or the work force; organize college and career experiences for middle college students	Certified counselor with a strong understanding of college admissions and local industry
Northwest Instructors	Multiple depending on courses selected	Teach college credit hour bearing courses on the Northwest campus for middle college students	Certified college instructors
Virtual School Coordinator	1	Serve as the virtual school coordinator for middle college dual credit courses offered through Northwest Community College	Certified classroom teacher with a strong technology background; experience in Schoology and Blackboard

**Note to applicant: Add more rows as needed.*

Describe the overall staff organizational plan that involves shared leadership with the teachers.

Oxford School District Model of Continuous Improvement

A survey will be administered to all Oxford School District students, parents, and staff members to identify the problems that stakeholders feel have the most negative influence on student achievement. Once the problems are identified, teachers will join a networked improvement community of their choice that will seek to identify possible change agents to eliminate or address the issues. Teachers will be instructed to choose the area of improvement in which they are most passionate. As a result, teachers will have the opportunity to work with teachers across all grade levels and content areas within the Oxford School District and solve problems for OSD students at the practitioner level. Following a model of continuous improvement that has practitioners at the center of the process instead of implementing change from “top down” is a true shared leadership model that shows value to students and teachers.

Oxford High School Middle College

The Oxford School District will hire a Middle College principal to serve as the facilitator for both programs as well as serve as the liaison between the Oxford School District and Northwest Community College.

Students who choose the Middle College Pathway will take 30 dual credit hours their junior year of high school. Students may enroll in classes provided on the Oxford High School campus or classes offered at the Northwest Community College campus. Oxford High School currently offers 27 hours of Northwest dual credit courses including 6 hours of credit from each of the four core content areas. All instructors of dual credit courses that are employed by Oxford School District have been approved by Northwest Community College. The following year, as Oxford High School seniors, middle college students will attend a greater portion of their day on the Northwest Community College Campus under the guidance of the Oxford School District Middle College Principal. Students will also enroll in courses of interest (fine arts, athletics, CTE courses, etc.) at Oxford High School.

A professional learning community will be established for Middle College instructors and the college and career counselor. The PLC will meet twice a week to discuss student achievement and best instructional practices. The Middle College principal will attend at least one of the PLC meetings each week.

Oxford High School Career Academies

The Oxford High School Career Academy Teams will be comprised of at least one CTE instructor and one teacher from each of the four core content areas. Each career academy team will meet at least twice a week to discuss student achievement and best instructional practices.

Explain how the district will address staff retention and recruitment during the first three years of the innovation plan.

Due to living in a thriving and prosperous community, Oxford School District does not have an issue with teacher retention. Oxford teachers are afforded resources that most districts are not able to provide. Oxford School District has one of the highest local teaching supplements in the state of Mississippi. Each year, Oxford School District hosts its own recruitment fair (with over 100 attendees) to vet possible teacher candidates. OSD accommodates approximately 40 University of Mississippi student teachers each year which adds a significant number of teacher candidates to the job pool.

Describe staff and stakeholder support for the proposed innovation. Attach evidence of support.

The Oxford community is a progressive community that is very much engaged in the education of their children. The Oxford School District surveys parents, students, and teachers each year to gain insight on areas in which stakeholders would like to see the school district progress. In 2018, district administration took an additional step and asked parents to re-imagine education due to an ever changing society and job market. In April of this year, Oxford School District hosted four showings of the award winning documentary, *Most Likely to Succeed* at the Kayla Mize Auditorium on the campus of Oxford Middle School. All stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, business leaders, etc.) attended the showings and gave valuable insight to Superintendent Brian Harvey on their view of educating children for the society of the future. Based on the feedback from all stakeholders, Superintendent Harvey established the Portrait of a Graduate Committee to examine the characteristics that Oxford residents expect from an Oxford High School graduate. The District of Innovation application was pursued as a result of the stakeholder input from the showing of “Most Likely to Succeed” and the Oxford School District Portrait of a Graduate process. Through this robust process of gaining stakeholder feedback, it has become evident to Oxford School District administration that the District of Innovation status is a must for our students if we want to produce the members of society that our community stakeholders desire.

See Attachment A which includes the following:

- *Most Likely to Succeed* News Release
- Comments from *Most Likely to Succeed* community showings
- Portrait of a Graduate committee meeting agenda
- AdvancEd Summary Report

Describe the professional development planned for the staff that is directly related to the proposed innovation.

The chart below outlines the four-year professional development timeline for all Oxford School District schools. The timeline was developed by the Oxford School District Curriculum and Instruction Team which will begin further developing the four-year professional development plan in January 2019. All professional development implemented in the Oxford School District will be targeted professional development that supports the *Portrait of a Graduate, 95 in 5*, and the *District of Innovation*.

	Bramlett	OE	Della	OIS	OMS	OHS
2018-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conscious Discipline 		Schoolology Trial			
2019-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transforming instruction using the iPad Conscious Discipline STEAM Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 1-2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole Child Initiative Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 1-2 Transforming instruction using the iPad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards Based Grading Whole Child Initiative Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 1 & 2 Transforming instruction using the iPad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole Child Initiative Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 1 & 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole Child Initiative Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 1 & 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middle College Whole Child Initiative Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 1 & 2
2020-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conscious Discipline Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 3-6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District Homework Policies; How Nonacademic Factors affect grades; incomplete and late assignment policies Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 3-6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iPad Rollout District Homework Policies; How Nonacademic Factors affect grades; incomplete and late assignment policies Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 3-6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards Based Grading iPad Rollout District Homework Policies; How Nonacademic Factors affect grades; incomplete and late assignment policies Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 3-6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards Based Grading iPads Rollout District Homework Policies; How Nonacademic Factors affect grades; incomplete and late assignment policies Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 3-6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iPad Rollout District Homework Policies; How Nonacademic Factors affect grades; incomplete and late assignment policies Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 3-6 New Virtual School Rollout using Schoology
2021-22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 7-8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 7-8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 7-8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 7-8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 7-8 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards Based Grading Career Academies Portrait of a Graduate Transition Goals 7-8
2022-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified Calendar

Innovative Plan Component #6: Stakeholder Collaboration

Explain how the district will demonstrate stakeholder support *and* capacity to create the change desired in the school.

Oxford School District staff is committed to providing a redesigned educational experience for the students of the Oxford School District in order to prepare them for their college and career experiences. As a part of the process, we will continue to survey students, teachers, and parents yearly using the *Youth Truth Survey* to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students through our innovative programs.

Describe the plans for ongoing collaboration among parents, education partners, business and industry partners, and community partners, as well as their roles in the school.

Parents are an integral part of improving the educational experience for the children of the Oxford community. Beginning in February of each school year, Oxford High School counselors schedule planning meetings with students and parents to discuss educational plans in preparation for the following school year. Oxford Middle School and Oxford High School also utilize Naviance as an integral part of the educational experience for students and parents. Naviance is a comprehensive college and career readiness solution that helps students, teachers, and parents align student strengths and interests to postsecondary goals, improving student outcomes and connecting learning to life.

In order to fully implement career academies at Oxford High School, local business and industry participation is vital. The Oxford School District is committed to hiring a Career Academy Director for the 2019-20 school year, two years before full implementation of the Oxford High School Career Academy Educational Pathway, to begin establishing strong partnerships with businesses in Oxford.

Attach documentation (partner agreements, memoranda of understanding, and other legal agreements) for implementation of the innovative school or district.

See Attachment B which includes the following:

- Letter from Jon Maynard, President and CEO of Oxford-Lafayette Economic Development Foundation
- Letter from Jeremy Isome, Pre-College Director at Northwest Community College
- Resolution from the Oxford School Board
- Lafayette School of Applied Technology Agreement

Innovative Plan Component #7: Governance

Describe the proposed governance structure planned for the school(s).

The Oxford School District uses site-based management as its governance structure. Principals are given the latitude to make instruction and staffing decisions within the confines of the district’s mission and strategic plan. Other documents governing our behavior toward academic achievement include any state required plans, federal programs, and the Oxford School District Portrait of a Graduate, and “95 in 5” plan.

Explain the district’s role in school oversight, support, professional development, and reporting and monitoring.

The Oxford School District Curriculum and Instruction Department is a team of ten members that will provide professional development and support and oversight for implementation of the programs outlined in the District of Innovation application. The team members and their roles are outlined in the chart below.

Team Member	Title	Responsibility
Bradley Roberson	Assistant Superintendent & Director of Curriculum	Leads the implementation of the vision of the district set by the superintendent; Provides leadership and oversight for K-12 Curriculum and Instruction
Candy Mize	Director of Elementary Curriculum and Professional Development	Provides guidance, structure, and oversight to Oxford School District Professional Development Plan
Stephanie Stallings	STEAM Coordinator	Provides instructional leadership for Math, Science, Engineering, Applied Arts (including CTE) at the district and building levels
Thomas Herrington	STEAM Coach and Virtual School Coordinator	Provides instructional leadership for Math, Science, Engineering, Applied Arts (including CTE) at the district and building levels and manages the Oxford School District Virtual School.
Wendy Raby	STEAM Coach	Provides instructional leadership for Math, Science, Engineering, Applied Arts (including CTE) at the district and building level
Jill Knox	STEAM Coach	Provides instructional leadership for Math, Science, Engineering, Applied Arts (including CTE) at the district and building levels
Brian Buckhalter	Instructional Coach	Brings evidence-based practices into classrooms by working with teachers and other school leaders
Chasity Arbuckle	Instructional Coach	Brings evidence-based practices into classrooms by working with teachers and other school leaders
Marilyn Barnes	Instructional Coach and AVID Director	Brings evidence-based practices into classrooms by working with teachers and other school leaders
Tamara Hillmer	Director of Early Childhood	Develops and maintains a developmentally appropriate program for preschool age students

Identify the members of the advisory board. Explain how each member will contribute to the district's innovation plan.

Team Member	Title	Contribution
Brian Harvey	Superintendent	Provides the vision for the Oxford School District
Bradley Roberson	Assistant Superintendent and Director of Curriculum	Leads the implementation of the vision of the district set by the superintendent; Provides leadership for K-12 Curriculum and Instruction
Steve Hurdle	Director of Career Academies and Middle College Principal	Provides leadership for teaching and learning in the Career Academies and Middle College
Chandler Gray	Oxford High School Principal	Provides leadership for teaching and learning at Oxford High School
Audra Rester	Oxford Middle School Principal	Provides leadership for teaching and learning for students entering high school
Marni Herrington	Della Davidson Elementary Principal	Provides insight from an elementary school perspective
Candy Mize	Professional Development Coordinator	Provides guidance and structure to Oxford School District Professional Development Plan
Dr. David Rock	Dean of the School of Education for the University of Mississippi	Provides post-secondary insight as well as parental insight
Jeremy Isome	Northwest Community College Pre-College Director	Partner for Middle College
Jon Maynard	President and CEO of Oxford-Lafayette Economic Development Foundation	Community member and business partner
Thomas Herrington	OSD Virtual School Coordinator	Partners with Northwest Community College to provide online coursework for OHS students

Innovation Plan Component #8: Waivers and Exemptions

Process Standard	Waiver(s) from State or Local Policies, Requirements, or Restrictions	Rationale for Waiver Request
Standard 2.2	With the exception of academic core subjects, the professional staff in each school is comprised of no more than 5% of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) units working outside the area or areas of endorsement. Assistant principals and administrative interns who are not properly endorsed may be included in the 5% FTE working outside their area of endorsement, provided that they do not act in the place of the principal. An appropriate license is required for superintendents, principals, librarians, and guidance counselors.	When hiring instructors to teach the career technical education courses, we want to ensure we hire the best instructors for the students of Oxford High School. The best instructors will be individuals with experience in the field and may not have a teacher's license.
Standard 13.2	The school district must ensure that during the academic school year a minimum of 140 hours of instruction is provided for each Carnegie unit of credit offered and 70 hours for each one-half unit offered, except for remedial instructional programs, dual enrollment/dual credit, correspondence courses, MS Virtual Public-School courses, and innovative programs authorized by the State Board of Education.	<p>Due to our nontraditional block schedule, all of our courses may not meet the required minimum number of minutes listed in the accreditation standards. The nontraditional schedule allows students more credit opportunities and a more personalized learning experience.</p> <p>Due to requesting additional 60% days for professional development purposes, OSD students will not meet the seat time requirement. We want to ensure our students receive Carnegie unit credit for their coursework.</p>
Standard 13.3	No more than two (2) of the 180 days may be 60% days. Both teachers and pupils must be in attendance for not less than 60% of the normal school day. {Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-5(j)}	Professional development is vital in the implementation of new initiatives in a school district. Due to the magnitude of the changes being instituted in the Oxford School District, more professional development opportunities are needed to support full implementation of OSD's Portrait of a Graduate and District of Innovation plan.

**Note to Applicant: Add more rows as needed.*

Innovation Plan Component #9: Timeline of Activities

Explain the planning activities that have taken place up to this point.

- April 16 First showing of documentary film *Most Likely to Succeed*
- April 19 Second showing of documentary film *Most Likely to Succeed*
- April 24 Third showing of documentary film *Most Likely to Succeed*
- April 26 Fourth showing of documentary film *Most Likely to Succeed*
- May 7 First Portrait of a Graduate Meeting
Objective: Develop a Portrait of a Graduate for the Oxford School District in order to frame a new vision for our school system; a vision for 21st century learning that is locally developed, but globally positioned.
- What are the hopes, aspirations, and dreams that our community has for our young people?
 - What are the skills and habits of mind that our children need for success in this rapidly changing and complex world?
 - What are the implications for the design of the learning experiences, and equitable access to those experiences, that we provide in our school system?
- May 18 Second Portrait of a Graduate Meeting
Objective: Aligning Portrait of a Graduate Competencies
- Organize brainstorming session of Portrait of a Graduate competencies
 - Narrow down and unify around 6-8 competencies
 - Draft visual Portrait of a Graduate representation
- July 1 Established a District of Innovation Team
- July 19 First District of Innovation Team Meeting
- Why are we seeking district of innovation status?
 - What are the goals of a district of innovation?
 - Presented innovative practices of other schools
- August 30 Second District of Innovation Team Meeting
- What should innovation look like for OSD students?
 - Establish a vision and mission for OSD District of Innovation
 - What gives OSD students the best opportunity to be college and career ready?
- September 13 Visited G-Tech Early College and met with panel of individuals from the Mississippi Department of Education, the Research and Curriculum Unit at Mississippi State University, and East Mississippi Community College
- September 15 Third District of Innovation Team Meeting
- Discuss the application process
 - What relief do we need from MDE?
 - Refine district of innovation vision and mission
- October 1 Presented District of Innovation application themes and main ideas to superintendent
- October 12 Met with Northwest Community College representatives regarding a Middle College partnership
- October 19 Presented District of Innovation application themes and main ideas to Ms. Dana Bullard to receive feedback
- October 31 Met with Northwest Community College representatives regarding a Middle College partnership
- November 26 Presented District of Innovation application themes and main ideas to the Oxford School District Board

Explain the key planning activities that still remain from the time of plan submission to the opening of school.

The Oxford School District Innovation Team and Advisory Board will continue to meet throughout second semester to resume planning for the innovative program implementation as indicated by the Oxford School District Innovation Timeline. The Curriculum and Instruction Department will meet weekly throughout the remainder of the school year to plan the professional development for all Oxford School District schools based on the four-year professional development plan. The Oxford School District Curriculum Team will meet throughout the summer to create transdisciplinary goals that support the Oxford School District Portrait of a Graduate and District of Innovation plan. The Oxford School District Strategic Planning Team (facilitated by AdvancED) will begin meeting in January of 2019 with the goal of completing the strategic plan by June 2019.

Explain the continual monitoring practices that will occur throughout the implementation process.

As a component of our strategic plan, all Oxford School District schools and departments will have a report card that targets district goals (which will include “95 in 5” as well as the Portrait of a Graduate). School and department report cards will be reported to the Oxford School District Board and the Mississippi Department of Education quarterly (months April, July, October, and January). Between the forty-five day cycles, formative data will be collected at the school level to provide insight on the effectiveness of district initiatives. The formative data and 45-day report card cycles will be used to make adjustments to district initiatives as needed to meet district goals regarding student achievement.

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NEWS RELEASE



Contact: Heather Lenard, Communications Coordinator
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Date: Tuesday, April 3, 2018

For Immediate Release

OXFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT HOSTS SCREENING OF SUNDANCE- SELECTED DOCUMENTARY, MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

Oxford, Mississippi is one of more than 3,500 communities working to re-imagine the purpose of education

Oxford, Mississippi —Oxford School District will take part in *Most Likely to Succeed's* worldwide campaign to re-imagine education. The acclaimed film *Most Likely to Succeed* offers an inspiring look at what students and teachers are capable of—if we have the vision and courage to transform our schools. Audience members call it the most compelling film ever done on the topic of school. In the past year, more than 3,500 communities have booked a screening of *Most Likely to Succeed*.

Oxford School District will host multiple screenings of *Most Likely to Succeed*, followed by an interactive discussion about re-imagining our school system with OSD Superintendent, Brian Harvey. These community-wide events are free and will be held at the Kayla Mize Auditorium at Oxford Middle School at 224 Bramlett Boulevard; Oxford, Mississippi, 38655.

Monday, April 16, 2018, 6pm-8pm

Thursday, April 19, 2018, 6pm-8pm

Tuesday, April 24, 2018, 6pm-8pm

Thursday, April 26, 2018, 6pm-8pm

The purpose of these events is to foster meaningful discussion among educators, administrators, parents, and students about how current obstacles can be overcome and steps towards change can be taken on a local level. Born out of these conversations is a community-wide commitment to moving forward; transformational initiatives are undertaken and real change is ignited.

For more information regarding this event, please visit www.oxfordsd.org/mlts

Question 1

What skills do you think are essential for our students' future?	
1	teamwork, communication
2	critical thinking, curiosity, perseverance, empathy
3	Creativity, grit, cooperation, ability to rise from mistakes and failures, drive,
4	Critical thinking and problem solving skills, communication skills and a work ethic needs to be developed.
5	STEM, Project Based, Reading, Math, Communication, Personal Behavior, work ethic
6	soft skills (being able to communicate and problem solve)
7	flexibility and innovation
8	technology, math, fluent reading, social skills, life skills
9	Reading for comprehension, problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork
10	Critical thinking, seeing all sides of a situation before acting, math, science, art, reading. Others are self-directed learning, collaboration with others.
11	creative problem solving perseverance adaptability
12	Communication, writing, problem solving, and knowledge of technology .
13	Critical thinking/problem solving, arts/humanities, technology
14	Problem solving skills, social skills, and academic skills
15	Resilience, diligence, knowledge of basic fundamentals in math, English, history and science and a kindness and empathy toward others.
16	Morals, values, self esteem, empathy-emotional intelligence
17	the ability to think creatively and critically; the ability to write and speak clearly
18	Resilience/GRIT, critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, collaboration, adaptability
19	Cooperation/collaboration, self-motivation, critical thinking, and general personal life skills like organization and appropriateness in communication
20	critical thinking, empathy, scientific literacy
21	critical thinking skills, creativity, communication skills, interpersonal skills
22	Creativity, empathy, the ability to work with others, the ability to overcome obstacles, and the perseverance to try different solutions to problems until they find one that works.
23	Self-discipline. Initiative/being self-directed. Collaboration with others. Critical thinking skills/ability to critically analyze sources of information. Creativity.

Question 2

What are some important differences between the school experience you see in the film and the school experience your students have?	
1	students had more experiences-like projects, public displays of work
2	Most of the time, my conversations with my 5th grader are about testing, test prep, and grades. Rarely does he come home excited about something he learned.
3	Students have no bells. They are in charge of proving what they have learned, but they have a say in how they do it. The teachers don't lecture or spoon-feed children. Glass walls. Teachers have autonomy. The classroom in the film looked like what I imagine Google or Apple looks like in their workplace. The students were engaged.
4	The main difference I see is student choice and a very hands off approach from the educators. The students are directing their own learning.
5	School in film was not for everybody. It was specialized for those with an interest. SPED, behavior problems, bottom 25%, athletes, general education people. Seems to fit the Charter School model better than general public education. Definitely did not fit rural area students/schools.
6	Less focus on accountability and more focus on developing a productive citizen
7	the students were excited about their work; they were active, not passive
8	the film stressed "hands on" learning. students only get that now in Insights
9	The teachers showed considerable respect for the students. There was very little lecturing and a lot of team work.
10	I have a kindergartener, I think the biggest is that the teachers don't have the ability to teach how they want to teach. They are teaching for the 3 big tests they have to administer during the year. For example, instead of sending how homework to practice for NWEA/STAR tests, let's do more creative and critical thinking homework. Let the teachers be teacher and explore their creativity and their passions for learning with our students. Overall, we have had a really good experience at Bramlett. My daughter completed PreK and she's almost finished with Kindergarten.
11	Student driven and centered Non traditional "bell" schedule community showing
12	The school in the film incorporates more creative ways to teach than our teachers are currently able to use due to state testing.
13	The school in the film seems very fluid and somewhat unstructured (no bells, seems less scheduled); it doesn't appear to have extracurricular activities (sports, music, art); seems to have fewer tests; more group work
14	I saw a very few number of students. I believe I remember a lottery system was used to select them. This seems to be the proper way to have this type of school. I don't see in a public school district our size any other way to make this happen. We have students who truly need the parameters of a traditional school setting. Some of our students would thrive in the setting portrayed in the movie.
15	Students in our district are often confined to desks or tables and are seated more than in the movie. The movie's Environment offers more collaboration and creativity in dialogue and content learned.
16	All film students had equal shots at self growth in he nest things
17	my children have largely been passive learners, memorizing information and taking tests; the students in the film were active, creative learners
18	The emphasis on testing takes away some of the joy of learning, and some of the opportunity that teachers might have to teach to their class's strengths and interests, and to foster community. The group efforts that the film students undertook together grew them substantially as individuals and as collaborative groups. A major difference, however, is the parental willingness to allow such "untested" teaching/learning to occur. I don't think Oxford parents--as a whole--would be willing to take that leap of faith. HTH was a magnet school, and as such there was some choice involved, with parents knowingly taking a risk. Another difference is that OSD has a track record--based on evidence--of academic success stories. I don't recall a long history of consistent evidence that HTH graduates have such placement rates. But then again, the film made a good argument that such academic successes, if based only on metrics, may have very little to do with eventual career success or happiness.
19	My kids were educated much like I was, and I do see how in the information age, memorizing information is no longer as useful as it once was.
20	Kids in the film seemed engaged at a high level. Like any film of this type, they tended to focus on the positives--I am sure there were negatives. But, the way the students seemed to "want" to do the tasks they were assigned really stood out. Also, far less testing!
21	Our schools stress memorization and test taking. The schools in the film focus on creative problem solving with the goal of producing a tangible project.
22	Obviously the structure of the general school day classes, curriculum, student involvement, teachers serve more as facilitators, way teachers are held accountable, grading system, hands on environment, how school s vary on teaching to the standardized testing, student's pride in their work.
23	Students are empowered to work on projects for various lengths of time, instead of dividing time into subject blocks. Teachers are empowered to teach students things that take a long time to develop, rather than being anxious about cramming information needed for tests. Emphasis is on learning a variety of skills, including real-world problem solving and inter-personal relations, rather than just facts and specific academic skills.
24	My son's day is broken into 30 minute segments and highly regimented. Rather than internal, self-motivation there is an emphasis on external rewards/"prizes." My child's educational experience is filled with standardized form of testing including Accelerated Reader and ESpark. My child's experience lacks the space for self-discovery and self-direction and the opportunity to focus for long periods on one interest/project.

Question 3

When you think back on your school experiences, what had the biggest impact on you?	
1	projects
2	Engaging teachers
3	The things I did that I could see a purpose behind. Once in Calculus we were studying optimization and we created a coke can that used less materials but held more liquid than the current standard size.
4	I remember the teachers who demanded excellence, but also gave us the tools to be excellent. One teacher, Mrs. Hoffman, at OHS was my most influential teacher. She was ahead of her time with methods that we currently use today such as group work. She encouraged creativity and found ways to include ALL learners and made each of us feel as important members in her class.
5	Math, Reading, Language arts, shop, athletics (applications of these). Used the skills to grow.
6	Relationships
7	having great teachers who encouraged my individuality
8	being told that a girl could do/be anything
9	Finding subjects I enjoyed and learning how to reach goals.
10	<p>When I was in the 8th grade I had the most AMAZING social studies teacher, Mrs. Dooley. She allowed me to become the best student in her class because we had group discussions all of the time. She also pushed me to be the best student by challenging us with awards.</p> <p>In high school, all of my favorite teachers were the ones who allowed more group discussions and less just sitting and listening to a lecture. I went to private Catholic schools because in New Orleans the public schools were not good.</p> <p>We also had lots of recesses at my Grammar school (grades K-8th). We also had P.E. at least 3x a week from what I can remember. Even in high school we had P.E. at least 2x a week and then we had a longer lunch to relax and hang out with our friends. We couldn't leave campus or anything like that. (Bad neighborhood in New Orleans so we were confined!) Anyway, students need more brain breaks. (I work on campus and RebelWell has been offering brain breaks for employees and faculty! Even adults need them!)</p> <p>When you have a teacher who can convey their passions about learning (whatever the subject are might be), you will also have students who have a passion as well for the same subjects. I have never been good at math but in high school I had two teachers who made me love math! I made straight As too!</p> <p>Also, when I think back to even my college courses at Ole Miss, I can honestly remember the classes that I did well in, we were allowed for more class discussion instead of just a lecture class. Maybe it's because I can fall asleep to just about anyone talking and talking in a classroom, but if you engage me, I'm there and I'm alive and my brain is thinking! I think most students are like this these days too!</p>
11	Projects extracurricular activities certain teachers
12	We need to prepare our kids for their futures and update the way that we teach. My relationships with my teachers had the biggest impact on me. They encouraged me and believed in me, and they let me know it.
13	Band and extracurriculars, specific teachers, independent projects
14	I believe teachers who actually taught made the biggest impact. In my day and currently, there are a lot of teachers who do not teach.
15	Science lab, school plays, engaged teachers and encouraging teachers.
16	Encouraging, patient teachers
17	positive reinforcement from teachers; self-directed projects
18	Relationships--with teachers, coach, band director, mentors. My town was small, but had a few exceptional teachers who were allowed to teach as they believed best for their classes. Because it was small, we all had accountability to each other, and pulled together as a community to make things work. Parents trusted teachers to do the right thing for their children. I will admit, however, that the BIGGEST impact on my school experiences was actually the influence of extra-curricular experiences (including those provided by my parents). Being a part of some larger group (ball teams, band, beta club) and being able to relate what I learned to the larger picture (through travel, etc.) was absolutely KEY.
19	socialization
20	Teachers who cared and made me better
21	My teachers' recognition of my creativity and its application to the material had the biggest impact on me.
22	A teacher who truly cared about teaching and the students' well being and assuring all the students learned the material not just memorization.
23	The experiences that had the biggest impact on me were raising money for Heifer International in fourth grade by selling popcorn that we popped in class at the cafeteria and then going to a Heifer International farm with our class, working on take-home final exams for Eastern Civilization in high school, and, most of all, studying abroad in France as a junior in college.
24	Personal relationships with my teachers/a mentor relationship. Opportunities to develop collaborative and leadership skills through sports and clubs. Classes that ignited my imagination through creative projects and literature.

Question 4

If you could change one major aspect of students' educational experience today, what would it be? Why?	
1	less tests, more experiences like exhibit art work, participate in a class play,
2	Fewer tests and more experiential learning
3	I would have more schools like the one in the video that offer kids more real-world related experiences and learning with focuses on different areas. Kids would be able to go into tracks for specified job skills and learning.
4	Both of my children were reminded constantly about "the test" in almost all of their classes. I know there is SO much pressure on teachers and the schools to have excellent scores. This is the major shift I have seen as an educator in the 26 years I have been teaching. Both of my children received excellent educations during their time at OSD.
5	Implement STEM Education PreK4 through High School.
6	More career based courses that can help students leave high school and start a lifelong career (Culinary, cosmetology, robotics, tourism, law and public safety
7	emphasis on learning, not testing, because I want students to love to learn and to have confidence in their ability to learn new things
8	better methods of teaching reading. get rid of Saxon Phonics
9	Smaller classes, less time in front of machines, fewer teachers using the words "shut-up"
10	More recesses, more brain breaks for older students, mandatory home ec or a "real life" class their junior or senior year.
11	I would expose them to many career options, not just college educated
12	I would decrease testing and increase volunteer work, hands on projects, field trips, and speakers.
13	The emphasis on accountability testing
14	Less focus on the end of the year tests.
15	Less focus on tests and specific measurable outcomes while emphasizing content, creativity and solution based experiences.
16	Collaborative working; humble some as they learn its better to be kind than on top; and build others up, as they learn they can do more than they know
17	deemphasize testing as the primary measure of success
18	Finding some way to allow each student to live up to his/her potential, not restricted to a curriculum that limits their development in their areas of strength. (For example, if a child in 2nd grade has a passion and affinity for history, make it possible for that to be a part of his/her curriculum.) The INSIGHTS program in OSD's elementary schools does help with this, for those lucky enough to be included. I know it's not possible for every child to have an IEP. But wouldn't personalized learning be ideal? Even when high school AP classes provide opportunities for accelerated learning, potential may not be met for those unable to participate.
19	Stop wasting time learning things we shouldn't be teaching. My sixth grader had to memorize all the states of Brazil several years ago.
20	less time teaching to standardized tests
21	I would change the focus on grades. My child wants to learn for learning's sake, but she worries about grades.
22	The opportunity for the students' to learn the material and apply it (not just memorize) perhaps through more hands on environment and in a way that helps them function socially with their peers and teachers which encourages success in future college and work environments.
23	I would move away from externalized reward/punishment systems and standardized tests and towards encouraging the development of the whole range of human skills, including inter-personal skills, empathy, perseverance, and real-world problem solving.
24	I would allow students more creative and self-directed freedom and opportunities to discover the joy of learning for its own sake (which also includes getting rid of excessive standardized testing and "reward"/"prize" systems) and also emphasize forms of engaged learning such as project-based learning and community-based, hands-on learning experiences. I say this because I think this kind of approach can reach the most kids with a variety of learning styles and abilities and also helps them develop as persons and not just brains.

Question 5

How do students in our school learn to make decisions? What are some examples of how our students experience leadership?	
1	through extracurricular activities and athletics- so what if a class put on a small play that was only 5-10 minutes but students had to experience creativity, speaking out loud, team work, etc without having to be in the drama club and putting on an incredible production
2	
3	Most of the time, they are told what to do and don't have the opportunity to explore and learn from their mistakes and failures.
4	I think giving students choices on projects is a start. Many of our students experience leadership in extracurricular activities and sometimes in class.
5	We try to offer many opportunities throughout the educational experience with group learning, hands on learning, project based learning, etc. Even learn by assigning homework. They have to decide if they do it, etc. Education is full of decision making processes. Work ethics, morals, values often determine their choices. and leadership. You can be a leader in the wrong direction!!!
6	This is an area of weakness in school. Students are told what to do. They make some decisions about when they take classes but not the classes. Students exhibit limited leadership roles in our schools.
7	there isn't enough, but the playground is probably the place where they have a chance to lead and make their own decisions
8	this area is lacking
9	Students "decide" every day if they will follow the rules or not. They decide how to react to the actions of fellow students and teachers.
10	I think through student organizations. I think also learning how to be a leader in the classroom. A teacher has so much power to create students who are leaders. I think group projects help to bring out leaders as well.
11	Decision making: picking schedules Leadership: taking different roles in groups and organizations
12	My kids main decision is to do the work or not. To go to the party or not. They don't have a lot of real decision making power at school. Leadership is also limited until middle and high school. Even then, there are only a select number of places to get involved and it tends to be the same kids over and over. Some marginalized kids could really benefit from being given a place to be a leader.
13	I'm really not sure about how students learn to make decisions. Some students experience leadership through extracurricular activities.
14	I think our students are asked to make very few decisions. Assignments are given, quizzes and tests administered, and then the circle begins again. In the high school, there are more chances for leaders to emerge with student government, sports, and labs.
15	My job as a parent (sadly)is to become obsolete. I strive to teach my children self-reliance and life skills so that they can go to college and beyond without me. Although I think students are encouraged to theoretically advocate for themselves in school, often teachers & administrators are more apt to listen to the parent & ignore a student. Students who communicate directly with teachers to ask about grades, tests and make up work are learning how to navigate college & ultimately their lives.
16	Decide based on requirements to succeed. Following script given in excellence.
17	they select projects to pursue and then, to a much more limited degree than we saw in the film, carry them out
18	The role of family should not be understated. Kids should be asked by their parents/guardians to make more decisions, although it is often more efficient for an adult to make the choice and tell them what to do. But the school day also provides a multitude of opportunities to allow for student decision-making. Learners need opportunities to make choices, especially in gray areas, even though most are infinitely more comfortable with absolutes--tell me what I need to know or what I need to do. Athletics do provide students with leadership opportunities, and opportunities to make decisions--guided, of course, in practice by coaching. The theater program has opportunities as well. But these extra-curriculars are not available to the majority of the student body. The challenge will be to provide curricular opportunities for all to experience this. More group work, perhaps?
19	I do think kids make decisions in Oxford schools, especially the high achievers who sign up for leadership positions. Finding a way for lower achievers to do the same would be helpful.
20	I am not sure about this. I don't see a lot of examples of student leadership even if they are there.
21	Our students seem to learn leadership more in their extracurricular activities than in their academic classrooms. Theater, journalism, and sports all offer opportunities for leadership experience.
22	I can't think of any great examples of how our students' learn to make decisions. The curriculum is set and they follow the teachers curriculum. I think leadership is encouraged in some courses such as Debate or various clubs or school organizations such as Student Council. There are also some programs in our community that a few of our students are fortunate to have access to and that info is generally provided by the counselor and a handful of students chosen to participate.
23	My experience is with kindergarten, which is early in a child's development, but where important foundations are laid. I've seen our son learn to make decision in the most positive way interacting with his friends' in class and on the playground and being given the freedom to take on independent projects. He wrote a 20-page "book" about wild cats at home, inspired by the writing and drawing he had done at school, and he was so proud he wanted to show it to his teacher. She then had him read it to his class, which was a highlight of his year.
24	I only have experience with a child at the elementary level. At that age I think one of the most important ways a child learns to make decisions and experience leadership is in the "free play" of the playground or PE class. In our child's class students also get a "choice menu" each week of a particular project they want to work on (though there also never seems to be enough time given for the child to complete it). Our child's teacher also introduced some stem projects that students worked on in groups which was fantastic. And I also think the theatrical plays that classes put on at Bramlett is a marvelous way for students to gain confidence in public speaking.

Question 6

Are both of these experiences equally effective in building grit? How do we best encourage students in our schools to develop grit?	
1	our students develop grit also though some classes, extracurricular activities, athletics, and grit to make it through the testing
2	Not at all. If a student doesn't see a purpose, then they will retain less learning from that, or may not even do the project at all.
3	I think students are very afraid to take risks and experience some degree of failure and don't handle disappointment very well these days.
4	Grit is a lot internal. You can influence it, but you cannot make people do it. Competition seems to build it.....unless you don't have a chance to succeed. Not every person is the same.....we are all unique.
5	Yes because in life you have to build grit by fighting through all life offers. We have to allow students the opportunity to fail and see the relevance in improving their failures to obtain a tangible outcome.
6	Making their own decisions, trying, failing, trying again.
7	the second is more important
8	I must say the student who kept working on his project long after his due date bothered me. In the "real world" a deadline is a deadline. Customers are usually really unhappy when you finish their product 3 months late. So while I appreciated his desire and interest in finishing the project, I think some lessons were missing. And, sometimes at work, you do have to complete things that you do not enjoy, like homework. So there is some "real world" application to building grit through doing homework even if a child has determined it is not relevant (and by the way, how does a child in the 3rd or 4th grade know what is relevant and what isn't?)
9	I think both can build grit. Sometimes as humans, we need different avenues to experience grit and perseverance. What might work for you, won't work for me. Of course that can be hard to translate as a teacher because every student learns differently. I think some skills like grit and perseverance also can be tested and found at home too or through student organizations. I think grit also comes from experience but it's something that really can set someone apart from someone else in the real world.
10	No; unfortunately, we see the first illustration more than the second; we have to be able to allow our students to fail....but to persevere....we tend to rescue our students too much
11	The homework doesn't build grit, only resentment. The project teaches valuable lessons and is something that can help the student get to college. Developing grit comes from challenges that our kids don't experience very much at school.
12	The second example is more effective in building grit because the student is engaged and therefore self-motivated. I was concerned, though, about where the other students in his group were. Was he the only one in his group who was really engaged in the project? I think we encourage students to develop grit through giving them agency/decision-making power over their learning, allowing them to fail and supporting them in learning from failure and/or obstacles.
13	For my children, there has not been a strong push to develop grit. There is a strong push to succeed - which is a great thing. I think to develop grit, one has to struggle and push through something that is difficult.
14	By challenging, listening, empowering and responding to students, we are able to keep them engaged. Engaged students are more likely to develop skills that will lead to grit and resilience. Students must take ownership of their work and enjoy it to better believe in it.
15	Awards and Accountability to follow thru with requirements.
16	I think we encourage students to take risks that are connected to outcomes, but the outcomes don't always have to be grades
17	If we could bottle GRIT, or even a simple formula for developing it, we would have a solution to a host of the problems plaguing Gen Z. I think the boy's persistence in his project was due to his own existing grit--not necessarily that the project built grit in him. As for the teacher's answer that "irrelevant" homework builds character, that seems an even lesser valid argument that this might help future perseverance. Of the two, however, the "authentic assessment" opportunity provided by the project seems more likely to have grit-building potential. A trusting relationship with a teacher whom you know is not going to ask you to do something of no value to your future (even if you can't see the value right now) seems the best way to encourage perseverance--even in the face of adversity. Most of us can hang in there for the long haul if we feel supported and encouraged by those whom we know care for us as individuals.
18	No, they are not equal. Ownership is important and teaching to the test allows for very temporary and rather meaningless ownership. Maybe mixing ages would help--kids being responsible for teaching younger kids.
19	I hate the term grit. I think it is over-used in discussing public education. Grit implies that students are sticking to their tasks even if they don't want to do them. How about instead of grit we teach them to have a love of learning? A sense of curiosity? That said, no. Obviously the second scenario is much more positive.
20	They are not equally effective. Telling the student to do her homework because it "builds character" will only defeat her spirit and love of learning. We can encourage students to develop grit by engaging them and their natural love of learning to help them meet a goal that excites them. In the film, the students were invested in projects they were able to conceive and execute; thus, they could see how their hard work would pay off in their own satisfaction and sense of achievement.
21	I can't think of any examples at the moment.
22	While there is certainly value in learning to do unpleasant things simply because they have to get done, it is true that children and adolescents - and all people - will work hard to finish a project in which they feel personally invested. Many students at our schools have opportunities to take on these projects, but they should be moved from the extracurricular to the curricular. When they are "extra" only the strongest students, the ones who have mastered the "basics," get opportunities to do them. All students could benefit from opportunities to do independent projects, including - and especially - students who struggle with basic academic skills.
23	I believe kids do have to understand that there are some things in life you just have to "suck it up and complete" (every adult has those tasks in their job) so the first scene is true to that. On the other hand, that must be balanced by students having the chance to choose for themselves the tasks/projects that they are willing to sacrifice for and to put in tons of time and effort; as Brian Harvey said at my screening, he sees that in the high school theater productions, and we need more opportunities like that for our kids to feel like they get to have some say in what they persevere for.

Question 7

What other learning is needed to support and encourage a process of observation, reflection, documentation and exhibition?	
1	communication, content knowledge
2	I am not sure.
3	I love the idea of project based learning as it was presented in the film. I do think students need skills to be able to make decisions as they work.
4	Film did not address anything PreK3 through 8th grade. The preparations that need to be there to thrive in this environment. All of these skills should be part of the general education and used in classrooms as a common practice.
5	Modeling
6	I think we have to provide them the basic tools, but if we make the tools a part of the project, they'll be much more excited to learn them.
7	reading is most important. reading should be exciting. if students love reading they can learn anything including how to complete a project.
8	Analytical skills, the ability to read for comprehension, organization and discipline, systems to insure that students are doing their own work and not having their parents "do their science projects."
9	I think more hands on learning. More labs, more discussion groups. I would even suggest classes where Freshmen and Juniors are paired. And then where Sophomores and Seniors are paired.
10	higher level thinking skills; organization; and some basic process
11	Thinking outside the box and for yourself would support this. Structure the high school class like a college class and give the students ownership.
12	Students need expert adults (teachers, community members) to guide & support them in that process.
13	Critical thinking, decision making, working with others.
14	Basic fundamentals such as grammar, math, science, reading are essential to reach a point of application of knowledge to a subject or project and ultimately a solution. One cannot build a house without proper tools and materials. Likewise a student cannot reach a goal without the tools to process & work on the solution.
15	Collaborative Projects students choose from (options)
16	that's a great 4 step process that could shape every project students undertake, beginning with elementary school students; I'm not sure about other learning beyond that
17	CRITICAL THINKING is the biggest thing, I believe. It's a hard thing to teach. But we need to do a better job offering students opportunities to actually think for themselves, and develop the ability to discern, strategize, analyze, and create. STEM and the Arts are awesome ways to foster those abilities (both are excellent avenues for authentic projects). But that fostering must be intentional. Teachers must be given the training to build them.
18	Learning to be accountable.
19	I think we have baked into our children a sense that failure is unacceptable. That the only way to measure your success is GPA and ACT. I want to see risk takers and kids who are prepared to try and fail. Oxford is so caught up in the numbers and rankings. The problem is that to fix that school systems need to shift together K-12 and colleges need to shift their admissions policies.
20	Honest critique. Teachers, parents, and peers can be valuable resources of constructive criticism. People grow and learn when they receive intelligent, sensitive, thoughtful feedback.
21	
22	All types of learning are needed to carry out this process: general skills like reading and writing, but also, in many cases, specific mathematical or other skills. Students also need the self-awareness to see their own and others' strengths and weaknesses and encourage themselves and their friends.
23	For one thing I know friends who have kids in schools in other states where even at the elementary level kids work in groups on a project that is then "presented" in an open house setting like the one in the film--even kids who are only 7 years old. Here I think the district could look at research on community-based learning projects where students work on a project that actually has real-life relevance and can be presented to a "live" audience such as the board of alderman or a non-profit agency.

Question 8

To what degree, in your school, are students encouraged to participate in self-reflection and self-assessment?	
1	not much focus on this currently
2	In lower grades, my son had integrity time which was a good opportunity to work on character building. As he's gotten older, there is less time for that of reflection.
3	Very little in my experience, my classroom included. But I plan to change that as soon as next year.
4	I am not sure I have seen much of this with my children. As a teacher, I know it is encouraged, but honestly, it is not ingrained in the culture.
5	A lot. I am in Prek3-6th grade. We do lots of STEM, reading, projects, hands on activities. We teach Spanish (advantages of bilingual brain) and focus on the whole child. We do not have the resources to work with children with disabilities.
6	In the AVID program, students reflection on their life goals and future outcomes.
7	Insights does this, but otherwise, I haven't seen it
8	very little
9	I have no idea
10	Well, my daughter is in Kindergarten so I would think just her abilities to shine each day as a student who listens well and plays well. Self-reflection is something that almost has to be taught at home too. So perhaps parents need to learn the skills to help with this as well. I also think for younger students, looking at what "they want to be when they grow up" and applying those characteristics more broader in terms of leadership, adaptability, high character, etc...For example, if my daughter wants to be a ninja when she grows up, then what are the characteristics that make up ninja? They are stealth thinkers, strong bodies, nimble minds, etc...And apply these traits to their every day life.
11	I'm not sure this is a strong component. However, when students have to use rubrics, when they have to quantify answers they are reflecting on the skills. We need to allow them (teach them) to self-reflect more.
12	I don't see this happening with my kids, other than the year that they had Ben Couey. He asked them to self-reflect and self-assess.
13	
14	I am not sure if students are encouraged to do this or not.
15	25-30%. More of the student day is spent in group setting and traditional lecture/note taking enunciation. Due to funding related to testing and attendance, our students are not encouraged to take time for self reflection.
16	?? Seem so busy...don't know of times
17	I really have no idea. When my children were in Insights, I believe they did this, but as high school students, I'm not aware they have.
18	I don't think reflection is encouraged often in our school (or similar institutions), because it takes time that could be otherwise used for content coverage (a primary focus). As a related issue, I believe that most students are woefully under-able to do these two activities. While reflection is the key to improvement in learning (and in one's career work as well), there seem to be few models to help them understand how to accomplish this effectively. It's not reflexive, for sure; and it can even be a bit "painful" to examine one's work or one's learning for the purpose of identifying areas of improvement. Students (perhaps all of us) tend to avoid tasks that are painful. Especially when there are so many other things vying for our time, including mounds of homework (generally non-reflective) and technology/TV distractions.
19	Only in classes like drama and debate.
20	Very little
21	Interestingly, I really don't know, as my child does not come home and talk about this at all. Instead, she talks about the grades she gets. That may well be telling.
22	I think to a small degree, sadly.
23	Our son has done a bit of self-reflection and self-assessment, and I believe his teacher encourages him to do so. But I have seen how external reward and punishment systems like behavior charts can lead to negative and unrealistic self-reflection and self-assessment. When emphasis was put on getting a good color for good decisions, our son ended up focusing on the fear of getting a less-than good color, and the anxiety generated by seeing his classmates get publicly shamed. Instead of developing useful self-assessment, he focused on the negative and insisted he "wasn't good at school" after one or two incidents. But when the teacher moved away from the color charts and other external systems, he relaxed and ended up developing a remarkable understanding of his own and his friends' behaviors.
24	For me this was the most powerful part of the film--a trusted adult engaging a young person about what kind of person they want to be. So far I have mostly observed externalized reward behavior systems where even our youngest students are just asked to "perform" what adults tell them to do. Our child has been fortunate to have a teacher who has talked with them about what it means to welcome people who are different from them. But in general I do not see this kind of mentoring happening day to day in the school setting (though I do believe it happens in the arena of sports which challenges us to make sure that our athletics programs do not become yet another way in which the privileged kids edge everyone else out).

Question 9

What new and innovative things can we encourage schools to try, even at the risk of having some of them fail?	
1	incorporate more projects and experiences even if it is hard to give a grade for them
2	Insights for everyone. Let's let all the kids build rockets.
3	More tech-based and life skills-based courses.
4	I do think hands-on projects and classes have great merit. I would love to see students pursue their passion and have fun learning.
5	STEM, Bilingual education, technology, communication, social skills
6	CTE courses
7	let students lead - what are they interested in learning and doing? how can we incorporate the basic tools into their plans?
8	More preschool options, especially for low-income families, at younger ages so that all are reading for comprehension at grade-appropriate levels.
9	I think sitting like they did in a group discussion for more classes! Easy to do and FREE!
10	More technical courses such as computer repair; culinary arts; pre-nursing
11	Some of the things that are done at OMS and OHS could trickle down. Stem classes, creative writing classes, etc. Also, taking kids to see relevant plays and movies, and to Ole Miss to see the Center for Manufacturing Excellence and other departments. More of the stem and creative writing classes at the middle and high school would be great.
12	Student-led projects and initiatives. More independent and interdisciplinary learning experiences.
13	I think having a Project Based Learning class at all levels for all children would be a great place to start.
14	Student led projects in journalism, drama, chorus, even district wide writing projects/contests are all small starting points to encourage creativity & project based learning.
15	Kids using gifts and interests for signing up to either do group projects (pertinent and applicable to life) or using gifts to help teach others or be taught by others. Helping them develop leadership by being better followers and vice versa.
16	create classes that are team-taught and interdisciplinary and perhaps centered on a theme; the university seems an under-utilized resource--there are a variety of interdisciplinary models on the UM campus
17	After school options are great for those who can make the transportation work. With community involvement, there are likely people who would be very happy to donate time (I'm thinking of the UM Science Cafe people, for some). But the OSD bus schedules are so rigid that they preclude taking kids anywhere else (like to UM campus), or running a late bus so that kids could stay after school lets out. For kids that are already in elementary after-school programs necessitated by parental work schedules, make opportunities available to them. (Currently, they are required to sit silently and do homework.) Bringing STEM (or art) project potential to those environments--even through high school volunteers needing community service hours for their own clubs--seems like an easy win-win. I have a child who is an after-school program participant at an elementary school this year, and I think it would be hard for me to be less satisfied with that program than I am. Many other parents feel the same way, but have no choice. Our children are not even allowed to develop their social skills or physical abilities in the gym, because their actions are so restricted to silent and "manageable" ones. Use that time, by engaging the community to develop these little ones who are primed for learning, and in a few years you will have them as older students modeling some of what you hope to see (reflection, critical thinking, perseverance). Make that system work for you, and for the children, rather than allowing it to remain as after-school doldrums.
18	No more teaching to the test, which would have to mean no more state testing. Or at least a whole lot less of it.
19	The thing that comes to mind in this context is the breaking down of traditional disciplinary boundaries. The physics teacher and the history teacher brought together their interests to create something extremely unique for their students. Again, though, this flies in the face of teaching to tests and AP all the time.
20	Add some discussion-based courses that start to show students that they are able to engage with material to be learned rather than just memorize it and reproduce it for tests. Have "tests" be interactive and perhaps oral. Let the material live and breathe.
21	
22	I believe we should encourage the teachers and administrators, starting at the lowest-levels, to research and implement classroom management and teaching strategies that allow students to develop genuine, real-world problem solving and interpersonal relationship skills. Reading, writing, math, science, and social studies are all important at that age, but learning to work together and fostering a personal interest in education are essential. We need to move from external reward and punishment systems like color charts, accelerated reader, and even excessive standardized tests towards flexible, teacher- and student-centered approaches that foster independence, self-reliance, and genuine interest in learning.
23	My experience is at the elementary level--but even there we could encourage teachers to give kids a full hour or hour and a half to independently pursue topics/tasks they are passionate about (I've observed the local Montessori school and I have watched 6 and 7 year olds work together on a task for over an hour and have remarkable conversation as they went along). Our child's teacher "partnered" with the high school chess teacher and student club and that was a great outlet for critical thinking. I also think we should do a better job of harnessing the time and passion of Ole Miss students for things like science clubs, theatre clubs, or music clubs where once a month college kids could come in and work together with our OSD students. For character and moral development we could create service opportunities for even our youngest kids--monthly visits to a nursing home or picking up trash around their schools.

Question 10

If you could change one major aspect of students' educational experience today, what would it be? Why?	
1	less testing, more experiences -research projects, group projects, mini productions, short essays, photography,
2	Less testing, less focus on grades, more focus from teachers and administrators on making learning engaging.
3	The ability to take more tech-based and life skills-based courses. These two fields are very understaffed with not enough experts and graduates in them.
4	I would like to see students learning life skills and develop a love for learning.
5	STEM type of education. Project based and hands on applying the skills/knowledge the students have. Take a real world problem and have the students solve it. We need more application of what we are teaching. Engage the learner in the learning process.....
6	More career courses. We miss the population of students who want to leave high school and go into the workforce.
7	for creativity and individuality to be encouraged
8	every teacher should be enthusiastic and accepting of all students
9	More pre-school options at younger ages is one of the only ways we will ever create a public education system that gives low-income children a fair shot.
10	Less testing, more group discussions, more recesses and brain breaks! And learning how to use a pen and paper is just as important as learning how to use a lap top.
11	Get rid of the state assessments that only assess one course in one year; those are not indicative of true life-long success.
12	Less busy work and less testing.
13	The focus on accountability testing--it takes time away from actual education.
14	I would like to see time well spent. There seems to be a lot of time wasted and waiting for the next thing. It seems we could get the same amount accomplished in a shorter day or a shorter school year.
15	Less testing, more activities.
16	More "play" work- things they need to do for life: using life, leadership and relationship skills they'd enjoy gaining competencies in, and being able to participate/responsible/engaged/have something at stake for each other's benefit (even students tutoring small groups in act subjects). They get more out of giving than receiving. Some come to learn and others first need to be loved- It's a win-win.
17	I would emphasize the discovery of their particular talents and skills and deemphasize performances on standardized tests.
18	Testing that seems relatively meaningless and that seems to drive the curriculum, and perhaps the entire educational experience. Of course assessments are necessary to help identify the areas where improvement is needed. But the emphasis seems to be misplaced. Don't get me wrong. I am very thankful that OSD is a star district! It's one of the reasons that we live in Oxford. But I think a balance can be struck somewhere, with an increasing emphasis on more holistic student development. Thank you for the opportunity to share my views.
19	Insights should be for all kids. Every kid can benefit from those sorts of activities. So it's not like we have to reinvent the wheel--just use that curriculum for everybody.
20	I mentioned it earlier, but I will say it again. I wish I could tell my kids not to worry about grades or scores or rankings. But they have to worry about them in this school district and in this general educational climate. And I would start to de-emphasize AP courses.
21	Encourage more active learning. It is not healthy to sit in chairs all day long and try to absorb material being told to you. Include opportunities for physical movement as the students engage in new and creative ways with their subject matter.
22	I think the students need to understand and buy in to what they are asked to do or are doing. They need to understand how it impacts or plays a part in their future. They need to feel they are not just learning to be able to take and score well on an exam for college admissions or to exempt a final exam or just to graduate but they are learning to be a good productive contributing citizen to our community, state, country and world.
23	Move away from external reward and punishment systems. As I've written, I think this is an important element to teaching self-reliance, perseverance, a joy for learning, empathy, and other important skills and attributes.
24	I would take the kinds of opportunities and pedagogies we offer our most gifted kids and offer them to everyone (project-based, creative, exploratory) because that is how you get a kid to discover what they love, what they are interested in, and ultimately what they are willing to stay in school for. I would do this because as a college professor what I see way too often is young people who don't know how to read critically or for personal enrichment, who don't know how to analyze and synthesize information, and who have no idea how to work collaboratively and effectively with others. And a major aspect of that is to empower our teachers to make choices and to have freedom about how they shape their classroom and how they interact with students; a major theme of the film was the freedom that teachers had and I do not see that in our school district.

OXFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT 2018

The Portrait of a Graduate, through this inclusive process, will become the community's collective vision for our students.



Goals

- Review a series of books, articles, and videos to build background knowledge and understanding about the new global economy and its impact on education and 21st century competencies
- Draft a prioritized set of competencies including 21st century skills, mindsets, and literacies
- Reach consensus about a selected visual to share with the broader community
- Continue to discuss this work in the broader community and elicit ideas for the Portrait

These goals should reflect:

- ✓ how the world and society are changing
- ✓ the needs of the changing workforce
- ✓ how we can redesign educational experiences to best prepare our students to meaningfully compete and contribute in the 21st century.

Accreditation Recommendation and Index of Educational Quality™ (IEQ™)

The Engagement Review Team recommends to the AdvancED Accreditation Commission that the institution earn the distinction of accreditation for a five-year term. AdvancED will review the results of the Engagement Review to make a final determination, including the appropriate next steps for the institution in response to these findings.

AdvancED provides the Index of Education Quality™ (IEQ™) as a holistic measure of overall performance based on a comprehensive set of standards and review criteria. A formative tool for improvement, it identifies areas of success as well as areas in need of focus. The IEQ is comprised of the Standards Diagnostic ratings from the three Domains: 1) Leadership Capacity; 2) Learning Capacity; and 3) Resource Capacity and the results of elect classroom observations. The IEQ results are reported on a scale of 100 to 400 and provides information about how the institution is performing compared to expected criteria.

Institution IEQ	370.07
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Conclusion Narrative

The Oxford School District consists of seven schools located in Oxford, Mississippi. Through interviews, a review of evidence, observations, and deliberations, the Engagement Review Team identified several themes related to the system's continuous improvement efforts. High expectations are clearly evident throughout the system. A strategic plan drives the decision-making process and the strategic goals have been integrated into the superintendent's evaluation to ensure administrative accountability. System leaders encourage collaboration, both internally and externally. Internal collaboration occurs between administrators and professional learning communities have been formed to support collaboration between teachers and other staff members. A number of community partnerships have been established to enhance collaboration with the community served by the system. The governing body has supported continuous improvement efforts by instituting systematic processes for the allocation of resources and the regular review and revision of policies. System leadership has also implemented multiple communication strategies to keep stakeholders informed of the system's improvement initiatives.

The system has placed a strong emphasis on educating the "whole" student. Child nutrition is a very important focus of the system. A program called "Good Food for Oxford Schools" has been established to ensure students are eating properly to support their learning. "Love Packs" are prepared so that needy students have meals over the weekends and free meals are offered to students over the summer. The high school has implemented a program called "Do you really know me?" that involves staff members meeting with groups of students for the purpose of getting to know the students and listening to their concerns. The Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program has also recently been implemented to provide additional support for at-risk students and help them become college and career ready.

Data is effectively used for decision-making from the boardroom to the classroom. Numerous data sources were used during the development of the system's strategic plan and data is also used to monitor the progress being made toward meeting the system's strategic goals. Teachers and principals use formative and summative assessments to identify gaps and overlaps in the curriculum as well as to identify the learning needs of students. Stakeholder feedback data, via surveys and inventories, is collected and analyzed to provide insights related to stakeholder perceptions and classroom experiences. The use of data also extends to the system's support services such as maintenance and transportation. Clearly, a culture of data-driven decision-making has been deeply embedded in the system.

As with all high performing schools, the system has a laser-like focus on teaching and learning. The curriculum is

well-defined and aligned with high quality standards. Principals and teachers are dedicated to implementing best practice strategies for effective delivery of the curriculum to students. A formal professional development plan is in place that includes job-embedded training provided by dedicated instructional coaches. During classroom visits, the Engagement Review Team observed active student engagement, well managed classrooms, and a supportive learning environment. Students were polite and well behaved and many students appeared to be self-directed learners. As one team member stated, “there is a positive learning environment in all of the system schools!”

Along with a number of strengths, the Engagement Review Team also identified some areas where the system faces challenges. As noted by the superintendent in the Improvement Journey presentation, the system has persistent achievement gaps for African American students, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and limited English speaking students. While the most recent data indicates that the gap is decreasing for some groups of students, the achievement gap for students with disabilities has continued to increase. The system has identified some initiatives to reduce or eliminate the achievement gaps. Among these initiatives are the expansion of the pre-kindergarten program and implementation of the AVID program. The system is also exploring options to modify the Response to Intervention program to more effectively meet the needs of all students. The Engagement Review Team validated during classroom observations that Tier 1 instruction could be improved by providing more differentiated learning opportunities for students and increasing the rigor in some classrooms.

The Oxford School District is located in a community that also includes a major university. For this reason, the Engagement Review Team learned that there is an emphasis on preparation for college. The team also learned, however, that some students do not plan to attend college and opportunities for these students are limited. Some students attend the School of Applied Technology, but scheduling can be a problem for students due to the travel involved. The superintendent indicated that this is an area where improvement is needed and providing additional opportunities for apprenticeships, national skill certifications, and cooperative education experiences will enhance learning experiences for some students whose opportunities are currently limited.

Finally, the Engagement Review Team learned during interviews with parents that there is a need to increase the accessibility of counselors, particularly at the high school. One parent made a point to not place the blame on the current counselors, but she indicated that students needed additional assistance when searching for scholarships and completing the college admission process. Increased accessibility could also lead to additional opportunities for counseling in the areas of school-to-work and career readiness. Student inventory responses indicated that many students do not use counseling services on a regular basis. The system has attempted to use technology to complement the services provided by guidance counselors. Implementation of the Naviance program is intended to align student strengths with post-secondary college and career goals. During interviews, central office and school level administrators confirmed that there is a need to study options for increasing student accessibility to counseling services.

In conclusion, the Improvement Priorities identified by the Engagement Review Team are intended to address the overarching priorities the system should address to improve student learning and overall organizational effectiveness. The Oxford School District exemplifies a system that has made a commitment to continuous improvement. In order to reach the system’s full potential, there is a need to implement systematic processes to improve teaching and learning. Differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students and increasing the rigor in some classrooms will enhance teaching effectiveness and improve overall student achievement. Providing additional opportunities for non-college bound students will also help meet the needs of some students that currently may not be achieving at the level expected by stakeholders. Addressing the Improvement Priorities in a comprehensive manner will make a very good school system even better!

Next Steps

The results of the Engagement Review provide the next step to guide the improvement journey of the institution in their efforts to improve the quality of educational opportunities for all learners. The findings are aligned to research-based criteria designed to improve student learning and organizational effectiveness. The feedback provided in the Accreditation Engagement Review Report will assist the institution in reflecting on their current improvement efforts and to adapt and adjust their plans to continuously strive for improvement.

Upon receiving the Accreditation Engagement Review Report the institution is encouraged to implement the following steps:

- Review and share the findings with stakeholders.
- Develop plans to address the Improvement Priorities identified by the Engagement Review Team.
- Use the findings and data from the report to guide and strengthen the institution’s continuous improvement efforts.
- Celebrate the successes noted in the report
- Continue your Improvement Journey

Team Roster

The Engagement Review Teams are comprised of professionals with varied backgrounds and professional experiences. All Lead Evaluators and Engagement Review Team members complete AdvancED training and eleot® certification to provide knowledge and understanding of the AdvancED tools and processes. The following professionals served on the Engagement Review Team:

Team Member Name	Brief Biography
Steve Epperson	Dr. Steven Epperson earned a B.S. in mathematics from Eureka College, an M.S.E. in educational administration from Illinois State University, and completed his doctoral work in educational organization and leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He taught middle school and high school mathematics for 16 years before becoming a school administrator. Epperson served as a high school principal for three years before working as a school district superintendent for 13 years. Dr. Epperson retired as Superintendent of Roselle School District 12 in 2007. After retirement, he served as Interim Director of University Laboratory High School in Urbana, IL for two years. Epperson currently provides consulting services for Ideal Environmental Engineering and serves as an adjunct professor in school finance at the University of Illinois. He has extensive experience with AdvancED through his work as an educational consultant, facilitating STEM training for schools, and leading Engagement Reviews throughout the United States.



**Oxford-Lafayette County
Economic Development Foundation, Inc.**

November 26, 2018

Mississippi Department of Education
District of Innovation Committee
C/O Dr. Dana Bullard
P.O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dear Dr. Bullard

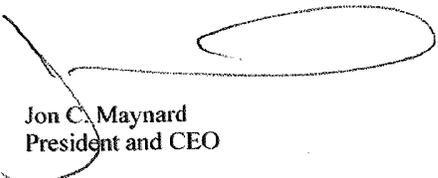
Education is the foundation for economic development. Oxford, MS has proven this link for several decades. As the quality of the education system in Oxford and Lafayette County has improved so has the economy and in direct proportion. I fully support the Oxford School District and their development of a District of Innovation.

Economic development, as a trade, is going through a tremendous evolution currently. We are no longer in competition for businesses in Mississippi; we are in competition for talent. We must have individuals with the skills to meet the current demands of the modern workplace. Developing a pipeline of talent that can adapt to the rapidly changing demands of modern career paths due to technology innovations is the new mission for twenty-first century education systems. The Oxford School District is uniquely poised in Mississippi to link innovative education with innovative careers, and to help position Mississippi to meet the workforce demands of the future.

School systems must regard their pupils as "future employees" as opposed to the traditional view of them as "graduates". A District of Innovation will expose students to a whole new set of options and ways of thinking to meet the future demands of employment. This is critical to economic success in Mississippi.

Please accept this letter of support for the Oxford School District and their application to become a District of Innovation.

Sincerely yours,



Jon C. Maynard
President and CEO



NORTHWEST
MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE

November 26, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Northwest Mississippi Community College is pleased to support Oxford School District and their development of early and middle college. In recent months, administration from both schools have met to discuss the establishment and implementation of both programs at Oxford High School.

During the upcoming spring semester, Northwest will be working with Oxford High School to identify students who are interested in middle college and develop a pathway which will allow these students to graduate with an associate of arts degree at the end of their senior year. With the approval of this application, students will be able to begin in the fall of 2019.

If I may be of any further assistance, please do not to contact me via email at jjisome@northwestms.edu or by phone at 662-562-3205.

Sincerely yours,

Jeremy Isome, Ed.D.
District Dean of Early College Programs
Northwest Mississippi Community College

4975 Highway 51 North Senatobia, MS 38668

Oxford
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board of Trustees

RESOLUTION

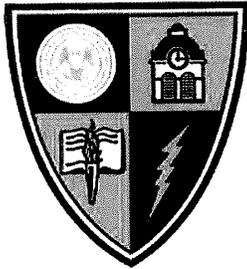
WHEREAS, at the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Oxford School District on November 26, 2018, the application for Oxford School District to become a District of Innovation, as defined by Mississippi Department of Education, was proposed and reviewed by the board; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of a District of Innovation or School of Innovation is to better prepare students for success in life and work by offering flexibility to meet goals and performance targets, expanding curriculum choice and instructional components; and

WHEREAS, School Districts that create programs to better engage students in learning through innovative structures that are limited by state statute are encouraged to work with the Mississippi Department of Education to create an innovative plan; and

WHEREAS, the District of Innovation designation gives school districts additional flexibility in several areas governed by Mississippi Department of Education; and

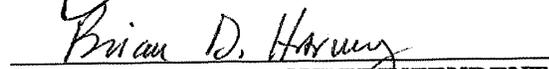
THEREFORE, let it be resolved that the Oxford School District Board of Trustees is in full support of an application to the Mississippi Department of Education as a District of Innovation.



Approved on the 26th day of November, 2018.



GRAY EDMONDSON, BOARD PRESIDENT



BRIAN D. HARVEY, SUPERINTENDENT

Approved by
Lafayette County School Board
September 6, 2018
Date

BOARD APPROVED
AUG 27 2018
OXFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

**AGREEMENT FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE
OXFORD/LAFAYETTE SCHOOL OF APPLIED TECHNOLOGY**

THIS AGREEMENT is entered into by and between the Lafayette County School District (Lafayette) and the Oxford Municipal Separate School District (Oxford) pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. ' 37-31-71 to 37-31-79, subject to the approval of the State Board of Education and in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth below as it pertains to the operation and maintenance of the Oxford/Lafayette County School of Applied Technology (SAT). It is mutually agreed between the Parties as follows, to-wit:

1.

The parties hereby create a Board (SAT Board) that will be responsible for the development and oversight of the SAT curriculum and the improvement and oversight of the SAT physical plant. The SAT Board shall consist of six (6) members, three to be selected from the Oxford School Board and three to be selected from the Lafayette School Board. The member's term on the SAT Board shall run concurrently with their respective School Board term. The Chairman of the SAT Board shall be selected from either a member from the Oxford or Lafayette School Board and rotated each year so that Chairman is a member from the other school the following year. The full SAT Board shall vote for the Chairman each year and the selection of the Chairman shall continue in this sequence throughout the term of this agreement. In the event that a member of the SAT Board ceases to be a member of his respective School Board for any reason, then the term of the member on the SAT Board shall expire simultaneously as the member's term on their respective School Board.

The SAT Board created under this agreement shall hold meetings at a time and place designated by the SAT Board, and special meetings may also be held by the SAT Board at a time and place designated by the SAT Board. Members of the SAT Board shall be compensated in accordance with the provisions of Miss. Code Ann. ' 37-3-4 (b) (Rev. 2007). Four members of the SAT Board

shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meeting, provided that a least two members from each School Board are in attendance.

2.

The parties hereby agree that the Lafayette County School District shall be responsible for the supervisory and administrative oversight of operations, maintenance and personnel of the SAT and shall serve as its fiscal agent. As the fiscal agent, the Lafayette County School District will submit financial reports to the SAT Board. The parties hereby agree that the maintenance and operation costs of the SAT shall be paid on an equal basis between the parties except as otherwise provided in this Agreement. The SAT Board will assess Oxford and Lafayette \$5,000 each to pay the Lafayette County Superintendent \$10,000.00 annually for the additional duties and responsibilities associated with the SAT.

3.

Each school year, the SAT Board shall determine the student capacity of the SAT, which capacity shall be divided on an equal basis between Oxford and Lafayette students. If either school does not meet its allotted capacity, then the other school shall be allowed to utilize the unused portion of the pre-determined student capacity with its students if the school so desires.

4.

This agreement shall be effective on the date the agreement is approved by the State Board of Education and shall expire on June 30th, 2019. If the parties desire to renew the agreement, each party shall give written notice of its intent to exercise its option to renew the agreement sixty (60) days before expiration of the initial term of the agreement.

5.

Without approval of the other, Oxford or Lafayette has the option to terminate this agreement at any time after giving written notice sixty (60) days before exercising the option to terminate the

agreement.

6.

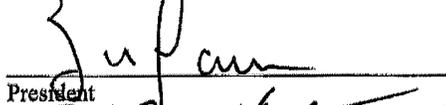
This agreement shall supersede any prior agreements entered into by and between Oxford and Lafayette as it pertains to the construction, operation and maintenance of the SAT.

7.

This agreement is effective subject to the approval of the State Board of Education.

SIGNED and AGREED to, this the 6th day of September, 2018.

LAFAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



President



Secretary



SIGNED and AGREED to, this the 27th day of August, 2018.

OXFORD MUNICIPAL SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT



President



Secretary