

OFFICE OF CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
Consent Agenda
February 19-20, 2015

OFFICE OF SCHOOL FINANCIAL SERVICES

D. Approval of appointments for Standing Commission on School District Efficiency

MS Code Ann. § 37-7-1001 authorized the State Board of Education to establish a Standing Commission on School District Efficiency. The commission shall meet and study the operations, rules, policies and regulations in school districts on an ongoing basis for the purpose of identifying opportunities to increase efficiencies, and to determine appropriate efficiency standards that should be considered for accreditation standards. The commission shall report annually its findings and recommendations to the State Board of Education, and the State Board of Education may make its report and recommendations annually to the Legislature seeking legislative support to achieve efficiencies in school districts. In establishing the Standing Commission on School District Efficiency the State Board of Education shall provide that the membership not be less than six (6) members. The State Board of Education shall appoint school district employees proficient in the areas of fiscal management, procurement, data processing or other fields of school business, with at least one (1) member being appointed from each congressional district. The commission shall meet on a date designated by the State Superintendent of Education and organize by selecting a chairman and adopt rules for conducting business. Members of the commission shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary travel expenses from any available funds for attending official meetings of the commission. The State Department of Education shall provide necessary administrative and clerical support for the functions of the commission.”

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached



Meridian Public School District

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Rebecca Stevens, CFO
rstevens@mpsdk12.net

Mr. Todd Ivey
Chief Operations Officer, Educational Accountability
Mississippi Department of Education
PO Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

November 5, 2014

Dear Mr. Ivey:

It is with regret that I tender my resignation from the Legislative Efficiency Commission, effective immediately.

I am grateful for having had the opportunity to serve on the commission for the past 2 years, and I offer my best wishes for its continued success.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Stevens
CFO
Meridian Public School District

Cc: Alvin Taylor

S. Melissa Barnes

200 W E Franklin Road
Morton, Mississippi 39117
(W) 601-825-5590 ext. 216
(C) 601-497-5271

Melissa Barnes is currently employed with the Rankin County School District as the Director of Purchasing and Finance. She was previously employed by MDE from August of 2006 until June of 2014. She began serving as Bureau Director of the Office of School Financial Services in January of 2010. Previous positions at MDE include Internal Auditor and Director of the Office of Internal Accountability. Melissa served as the Business Manager for the Scott County School District for five years and the Newton City School District for three years. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Accounting from Mississippi State University, is a Certified Public Accountant, and is a licensed School Business Administrator. She is a member of the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), MS Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), and the MS Society of CPA's. Melissa and her husband Chet reside in Rankin County. Their three children attend Pisgah High School. Erin and Emma are 16 and Davis is 14.

Thomas J. Burleson Jr.



9824 Ala Moana Street ♦ Diamondhead, Mississippi 39525
Cell Phone 228-216-1242 ♦ thomas.burleson@yahoo.com

WORK HISTORY

2010-present

Business Administrator, Pearl River County School District

- Create and maintain financial budget of over \$24 million
- Supervise five business office personnel
- Maintain proper accounting records as required by law
- Act as purchasing agent for the District
- Work with other Administrators to make our District more cost efficient while maintaining excellent education standards
- Negotiate contracts with various vendors such as insurance and copier maintenance

2004-2010

Finance Manager, Bay St. Louis - Waveland School District

Responsibilities included:

- Oversee Accounts Payable, Payroll, Human Resources, Capital Assets and General Ledger accounting functions for the entire district
- Direct supervision of six accounting clerks and secretaries
- Monitor \$20+ million annual budget
- Monitor all Federal programs and grants, request funds for these programs and supply necessary fund balances to program Directors
- Create year end financial statements
- Provide monthly financial statements to the Board of Trustees
- Liaison to the CPA Firm performing annual audit
- Conduct semiannual internal audits of district financial records
- Reconcile all District bank accounts
- Assist Finance Director with budgeting
- Responsible for coding all expenses and revenue
- Train new and current employees on accounting procedures

Other duties before promotion include:

- Coordinating and streamlining the payroll process for the entire district which consists of six campuses, 300 employees and over \$1.3 million monthly expense
- Filing all necessary Federal and State tax forms (ex: 941 Employers' Tax)
- Acting as the Applicant's Authorized Representative, responsible for assembling all pertinent information for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to write project worksheets due to damages caused by Hurricane Katrina
- Filing all documentation to Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for project worksheet reimbursements
- Created accounting system for tracking all FEMA funding

2000-2007 *Bingo Manager, American Legion Post 139 (Part time position)*
Responsible for conducting all gaming operations for the post in accordance with the Mississippi Gaming Commission Laws. This included, but not limited to, tracking inventory, direct supervision of six employees, assisting customers with any questions or comments, and filing a monthly financial report with the Mississippi Gaming Commission and the post's executive committee. Accountable for annual revenues in excess of \$750k.

2008-2010 *Public Accountant, Slick Accounting (Part time position)*
Assist clients with any federal and state income tax inquiries. Prepare federal and state tax returns.

EDUCATION

2009-2011 William Carey University, Gulfport, Mississippi
Masters' of Business Administration

2001-2004 University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Bachelors' in Business Administration with emphasis in Accounting

1999-2001 Pearl River Community College, Poplarville, Mississippi
General Studies

Saint Stanislaus College, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi
High School Diploma

CERTIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

- Certified School Business Administrator through the Mississippi Department of Education
- Proficient in McAleer Accounting software, Marathon Accounting software, Peachtree Accounting software, ProSeries Tax software, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, GroupWise email, and internet.

MEMBERSHIPS

- Member of the Sons of the American Legion Post 139.
- Member of the Mississippi Association of School Business Officials
 - Research Committee Member
 - Resolutions Committee Chairman
- Member of the Southeastern Association of School Business Officials

**Approval of Appointments for Standing Commission on School District Efficiency
Commission Members**

Rebecca Stevens resigned as Congressional District 3 Representative effective November 5, 2014.

Recommendation:

Move At Large Representative, Melissa Barnes, to Congressional District 3 Representative.

Appoint Thomas J. Burleson to At Large Representative.