

**OFFICE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**  
**Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items**  
**March 19-20, 2015**

**OFFICE OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

09. Approval of methodology to present Title I Distinguished Schools monetary awards in accordance with Section 1117(b) of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Purpose: The Mississippi Title I Distinguished School Program is authorized under Section 1117(b) of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The program requires states to recognize schools that have shown a sustained level of high academic achievement and success in closing the achievement gap between student (racial) subgroups on the state academic assessments. The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) recognizes Title I Distinguished Schools by presenting monetary awards in support of their academic and instructional initiatives that promote the continuance of the academic success of students.

Eligibility: All Title I schools (except those previously cited with major and/or significant deficiencies by the MDE) who meet the following criteria are eligible to be recognized as a Title I Distinguished School.

Criteria for Title I Distinguished School Award:

The Title I Distinguished School status is awarded to the top 20 Title I schools who have effectively closed the achievement gap between the black and white student subgroups in Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics for two or more consecutive years. As part of this recognition, the two schools with the greatest gain among all schools will receive national recognition as National Title I Distinguished Schools. All schools must meet the following criteria to be eligible for recognition:

- I. Possess a poverty rate of forty percent (40%) or higher;
- II. Not have been recognized as a Title I Distinguished School in the previous school year;
- III. Not have been identified as Priority or Focus under the ESEA; and
- IV. Student Achievement Data in (English/Language Arts & Math) must represent one of the following for two consecutive years:
  - Meet or exceed the state average for 1 year or

- Exhibit a high rate (percentage) of closing the achievement gap between student (racial) subgroups on the state academic assessments.

Funding Source: Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*.

Basis for Distinguished School Award: Formula

Funds will be awarded based on the following methodology:

I. Distinguished School Award:

Each school to be recognized will receive an award amount which is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Available Amount to be Awarded Minus } \$20,000}{\text{\# of Distinguished Schools}} = \text{Distinguished School Award Amount}$$

II. Top Two Nationally Recognized Schools Award:

Each school to be recognized will receive a base award amount of \$10,000 plus an amount to be determined utilizing the formula above.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

March 20, 2015

«School Name»  
«District Name»  
«Federal Programs Director», «Title»  
«Address»  
«City, State Zip»

Dear Federal Programs Director,

The Office of Federal Programs is pleased to inform you that school name is being recognized as a Title I Distinguished School and is receiving a grant award totaling «Amount». The funds are to support academic and instructional initiatives that promote the continuing academic success of school name. The funds must be used in accordance with the provisions for Title I, Part A funds, *Section 1117(b) Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*.

You may use these funds to supplement implementation of mathematics and literacy initiatives in grades Pre-K thru 12. Acceptable purchases may include but are not limited to items such as supplemental: books, tutorial services, professional development, technology, and parental engagement activities.

Enclosed you will find a Distinguished School Grant Plan. We ask that you complete and submit the plan by Thursday, April 17, 2015. Submit the plan and any questions to Kelsey Blumenberg, Distinguished Schools Coordinator, via e-mail at [keblumenberg@mde.k12.ms.us](mailto:keblumenberg@mde.k12.ms.us).

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number is 84.010 for this grant award. These funds must be obligated by September 30, 2016 and liquidated by December 30, 2016. Please inform your Business Manager and Principal of the allowable usage of funds and key dates.

If you have questions regarding this award, please contact Kelsey Blumenberg at 601-359-3499. Congratulations on your recognition as a Title I Distinguished School.

Sincerely,

Marcus E. Cheeks

Enclosure

**MDE Distinguished School Grant Plan**

**District:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Principal:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Federal Programs Director:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Manager:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Summary Description** (*How do you plan to expend funds to support academic achievement for your Students?*):

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**2. Proposed Budget** (*Give estimated cost for items to be purchased (do not exceed grant award amount):*):

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

The school district certifies that the plan is in accordance with the requirements of the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Federal Programs and the specific instructions included in the guidelines provided.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please note:** The intent of this grant is to support student academic achievement and must be used in accordance with Section 1117(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Acceptable purchases may include, but are not limited to items such as supplemental: books, tutorial services, professional development, technology, and parental engagement activities. If there are any questions or concerns, please contact Kelsey Blumenberg, Distinguished Schools Coordinator, at 601-359-3499 or [keblumenberg@mde.k12.ms.us](mailto:keblumenberg@mde.k12.ms.us).