



ELEVATE
TEACHERS CONFERENCE
2019



SPONSORED BY THE
Office of Teaching and Leading



PHIL BRYANT
GOVERNOR

April 11, 2019

Dear Friends:

As Governor of the State of Mississippi, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Mississippi Department of Education 2019 Elevate Teachers Conference. I hope you will find this opportunity to discuss current issues and strategies both productive and enjoyable.

The work done by the Mississippi Department of Education is very much appreciated. MDE seeks to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and in the workforce. The Board of Education's strategic goals are centered on achievement on every level of our education system. Our teachers are making a difference in the classroom, providing quality education for our students.

Many thanks are due to the host and organizers. I applaud their efforts to put on this outstanding conference.

Again, thank you for all that you do. Have a wonderful time!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phil Bryant".

Phil Bryant
Governor



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

July 8, 2019

Dear Educators:

On behalf of the Mississippi Department of Education, I am pleased to welcome you to the 2019 Elevate Teachers Conference. It is my hope that this conference will help you grow professionally and equip you with new ideas and information to help your students achieve success in school and life.

Mississippi students are achieving higher academic outcomes than ever before because we have raised expectations for what they can accomplish, and you have equipped them to meet, and exceed, higher expectations.

Thanks to you, students are proving there is no limit to what they can accomplish. Our graduation rate is at an all-time high, a record number of students have mastered grade-level standards, and student scores on national tests are improving at a faster rate than most other states. Our students would not have achieved the success they have had over the past several years without great teachers like you.

While we have more improvement to make, it is clear that the state's steady achievements in education demonstrate that substantial progress has been made. I look forward to working with you to build upon this progress and to make significant achievement a reality for all students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carey M. Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style.


Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Education

AGENDA

Monday, July 8, 2019

- 7:00am – 9:00am** **Registration**
Continental Breakfast
Vendor Exhibits **EXHIBIT HALL A**
- 7:30am – 8:45am** **Pre-Conference Sessions**
- 9:00am – 9:15am** **Welcome and Opening Remarks** **BALLROOMS A-E**
TeachMS Campaign
Dr. Carey M. Wright >> State Superintendent
- 9:15am – 10:15am** **Opening Keynote Address** **BALLROOMS A-E**
180 Days of Awesome – Celebrating Every Day of Education
Monica Genta >> Teacher, Mattoon Middle School (Illinois),
National Speaker
- 10:15am – 10:45am** **Break**
Vendor Exhibits **EXHIBIT HALL A**
- 10:45am – 12:00pm** **Concurrent Breakout Session 1**
- 12:00pm – 1:15pm** **Lunch Plenary** **BALLROOMS A-E**
Empowering the Heart of Education
Dr. Akil Ross >> 2018 National Principal of the Year
- 1:15pm – 1:30pm** **Break**
- 1:30pm – 2:45pm** **Concurrent Breakout Session 2**
- 2:45pm – 3:15pm** **Break**
Vendor Exhibits **EXHIBIT HALL A**
Refreshments (Available upstairs and downstairs)
- 3:15pm – 5:00pm** **Deep Dive Round Robin Discussions for Teachers**

PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS



Effectively Utilizing Teacher Assistants

*Dr. Mark Yeager,
William Carey University*

ROOM 207

Game Changers: Ideas that Engage and Motivate All Students

*Monica Genta, Mattoon Middle School (Illinois),
National Speaker, Teacher*

ROOM 208

Beginning Teacher Workshop

Krileshia Boyd, Meridian Public School District, 2019 Alternate Teacher of the Year

ROOM 209

Effectively Utilizing Teacher Assistants

One of the most valuable resources available to many teachers is the teaching assistant. The ineffective and inefficient utilization of para-professional educators leads not only to inadequate student supports, it ultimately results in poor student outcomes. This session will examine strategies to maximize the impact that teaching assistants can have on both classroom management and student performance. Participants will be exposed to strategies that address scheduling, coordination of content introduction, student support and complimentary skills to the teaching team.

Dr. Mark Yeager >> William Carey University

ROOM 207

Game Changers: Ideas that Engage and Motivate All Students

Every student who walks into your classroom deserves to LOVE that experience. In order to do that we have to reflect on the everyday practices we have in place and transform them from average to awesome. A bell ringer is average, but a learning attack is awesome! Collecting homework is average, but Olympic sprinting to gather them is awesome! Small tweaks to the great things we are already doing makes a big difference. Come learn how to be a game changer for kids and for education!

Monica Genta >> Teacher, Mattoon Middle School (Illinois), National Speaker, Teacher

ROOM 208

Beginning Teacher Workshop

This session offers a beginning teacher with guidance on how to survive the first three years in the classroom. She provides an encouraging and resourceful guide for educators who are within the first three years of teaching.

Krileshia Boyd >> Meridian Public School District, 2019/2020 Alternate Teacher of the Year

ROOM 209

CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION 1

10:45am – 12:00pm

Instructional Transformation:

Sharing What Works

Deowarski McDonald

Alfie Clark

ROOM 213

Supports for Math Academic

Classroom Teachers, K-12

Dr. Marla Davis

ROOMS 205/206

Supporting English Learners in the General Education Classroom

Sandra Elliott

ROOM 203

Keys for Engaging Parents in the Student Learning Process

Allison Ruhl

ROOM 204

Implementing Effective Strategies for Addressing Student Behaviors

Dr. Darien Spann

ROOM 201

Building a Positive School Culture

Dr. Howard Savage

Dr. Ben Burnett

ROOM 202

Mississippi Teacher Professional Growth System (PGS)

Ashley Kazery

ROOM 207

Educator Licensure: Updates for Teachers

Tamika Lipsey

ROOM 208

Teaching Students with Special Needs

Whitney Drewrey

ROOM 209

180 Days of Awesome – Celebrating Every Day of Education

Monica Genta

ROOM 210

NAEP: Data Tools on the Web

Jennifer Robinson

ROOM 212

Instructional Transformation: Sharing What Works

The Office of School Improvement has developed its work around a system of support geared toward integrating the Center for School Turnaround's Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement into the state's process for supporting schools and districts. The process is further supported by the MS SOARS platform and its alignment with indicators of effective practice as well as the allocation of Title I Part A funding, which are both used to assist schools in effectively implementing school plans. This session will focus on Domain 3: Instructional Transformation, which addresses the school's instructional system, a system that consists of planning, providing, adjusting, and enhancing instruction. This session will introduce the participants to the success indicators in the MS SOARS platform and provide practical guidance for improving student learning outcomes.

>> *Deowarski McDonald and Alfie Clark*

ROOM 213

Supports for Math Academic Classroom Teachers, K-12

During this session, participants will learn about instructional supports, strategies, and programs that can be used to identify students in need of interventions in the mathematics classroom. The activities displayed in this session can be adapted to any core content area across the grade bands. Participants are asked to bring a technology device with internet capabilities (i.e. laptop, iPad, or cell phone). Time will be allocated for Q&A.

>> *Dr. Marla Davis*

ROOMS 205/206

Supporting English Learners in the General Education Classroom

Participants will learn about instructional strategies to support their English learner students in the general education classroom. Additionally, participants will learn about the supports and resources provided in the EL Guidelines.

>> *Sandra Elliot*

ROOM 203

Keys for Engaging Parents in the Student Learning Process

Don't get caught in the parent trap! The teacher-parent relationship can make or break a student's success, and good communication is key. Ms. Ruhl will introduce you to old-fashioned techniques with a modern twist that will turn parents into partners. Join her to learn practical tips that will improve parent engagement and unlock your students' potential.

>> *Allison Ruhl*

ROOM 204

Implementing Effective Strategies for Addressing Student Behaviors

This session will be an interactive session discussing causes of behavior and using research-based strategies to help educators understand the reasons behind student behavior. The goal is for educators to leave the session with tools in their toolboxes that will help them to support those students who present challenges.

>> *Dr. Darien Spann*

ROOMS 201

Building a Positive School Culture

The culture of an organization, particularly a school, is very important to the success of that organization. Culture is often overlooked in the importance of academic success of today's students, but it is a major factor. This session will focus on how to work as a team to build a positive culture that promotes academic achievement.

>> *Dr. Howard Savage and Dr. Ben Burnett*

ROOM 202

Mississippi Teacher Professional Growth System (PGS)

This session will provide teachers with an introduction to the three-part Professional Growth System (PGS). Teachers will learn how to unpack each of the standards and domains and incorporate best practices for delivering effective instruction.

>> *Ashley Kazery*

ROOM 207

Educator Licensure: Updates for Teachers

The Division of Educator Licensure presentation will include information regarding Educator Licensure website updates, Educator Licensure Management System (ELMS) features, and licensure updates. Tips for faster licensure processing turnaround times will also be presented.

>> *Tamika Lipsey*

ROOM 208

Teaching Students with Special Needs

In this session, we will discuss visual and multi-sensory components that can make class time more productive for students with disabilities. Take home lightning lessons and ideas from your colleagues will also be provided.

>> *Whitney Drewrey, 2018/2019 Mississippi Teacher of the Year*

ROOM 209

180 Days of School = 180 Days of Awesome!

Awesome is all around us. Every day you walk into your school something amazing is bound to happen. Some days that awesome is easy to see, it comes in the form of laughter, academic progress, achieving goals, and building relationships with kids. Some days that awesome is nearly impossible to see among all the meetings, curriculum changes, displeased parents, and behavior concerns. Here is the cool part, whether you are having a level 10 day or level 0 day, focusing on the awesome has the power to turn each day of education into an exciting adventure in learning. Come along with me on this 180-day quest as we learn to focus on those little awesome moments that have the power to change everything. Because sometimes it's the little things that make the biggest difference.

>> *Monica Genta*

ROOM 210

NAEP Data Tools on the Web

In this session, participants will learn more about the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) that is administered to students in 4th, 8th, and 12th grade. We will take a look at how Mississippi has performed in the past and learn how the NAEP data tools on the web can give teachers an inside look at how Mississippi students are performing compared to students in other states and the nation as a whole.

>> *Jennifer Robinson*

ROOM 212



CONCURRENT BREAKOUT SESSION 2

1:30pm – 2:45pm

Effective Lesson Planning, Development, and Delivery

Dr. Stacey Donaldson
ROOMS 205/206

Paving the Way for Success in High School & Beyond

Chandrea Walker
ROOM 210

Supporting English Learners in the General Education Classroom

Sandra Elliott
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ROOM 212

Effective Lesson Planning, Development, and Delivery

“Fail to plan; plan to fail”. Planning for the delivery of an effective lesson is not the easiest thing to do, but it is the best way to achieve successful learning outcomes. In this session, plan to learn elements necessary to achieve successful student outcomes with every lesson.

>> *Dr. Stacey Donaldson*

ROOMS 205/206

Paving the Way for Success in High School and Beyond

How do you define college and career readiness? If the new goal for K–12 educators is to prepare all students to graduate from high school and be ready for college and career, then school counselors, teachers and administrators must begin this important conversation. This session will focus on the latest developments in graduation options, career and technical education, and college and career readiness.

>> *Chandrea Walker*

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>> *Jennifer Robinson*

ROOM 212



DEEP DIVE ROUND ROBIN DISCUSSIONS

3:15pm – 5:00pm

Deep Diving into Classroom Management

*Brittany Massey
Leslie Holloway*
ROOMS 205/206

Peer-to-Peer Discussion: Addressing Teaching Challenges in Mississippi

Phelton Moss
ROOM 212

Gamification: Making Learning Fun

Elise Brown
ROOM 201

Chronic Absenteeism: Impact on Student Performance

Toni Kersh
ROOM 204

Teacher Leadership & Advocacy: Why They're Important!!

Anna Morris
ROOM 203

Access for All—All Means ALL

Sharon Coon
ROOM 213

Data-Based Decision Making for Literacy Interventions

Kristen Wells
ROOM 207

Policy and Practices in Early Childhood

*Dr. Jill Dent
Monica May
Joyce Greer*
ROOM 208

Co-Teaching: Specifically, Designed Instruction for SPED and General Education Teachers

Christy Hunt
ROOM 209

Stop “Reforming” Schools: Empower People

Dr. Akil Ross
ROOM 210

Deep Diving into Classroom Management

Our Classroom Management presentation will provide educators with useful strategies for classroom management and positive behavior support across grade levels. It will also allow educators to collaborate with fellow colleagues in order to share ideas for classroom management and support.

>> *Brittany Massey and Leslie Holloway*

ROOMS 205/206

Peer-To-Peer Discussion: Addressing Teaching Challenges in Mississippi

In this session, participants will learn how to inspire generations of change despite challenges.

>> *Phelton Moss*

ROOM 212

Gamification: Making Learning Fun

Through this round table discussion, participants will discuss how using principles of gamification can motivate and engage students in learning. Discussion topics will include mechanics, key elements of gamification, and implementation. Bring your questions and let's talk aaaaaaaa!

>> *Elise Brown*

ROOM 201

Chronic Absenteeism: Impact on Student Performance

Educators will be provided information to enhance their understanding of the true definition of chronic absenteeism. The participants will exit understanding the importance of utilizing attendance data points to help identify why students are not coming to school and/or possible solutions to deter behaviors that may cause out of school suspensions.

>> *Toni Kersh*

ROOM 204

Teacher Leadership & Advocacy: Why They're Important!!

Move from a passive bystander to an engaged teacher leader. Engage with teachers who continue to teach students but also have an influence that extends beyond their own classrooms to others within their own school and elsewhere.

>> *Anna Morris*

ROOM 203

Access for All- All Means ALL

The Access for All (AFA) Guide was developed by the MDE in collaboration with educators across the state. This publication provides teachers and administrators with guidance on strategies and supports for struggling learners based on deficits exhibited by the learner. Attendees will receive a copy of the Access for All Guide and learn how to use this valuable resource.

>> *Sharon Coon*

ROOM 213

Data-Based Decision Making for Literacy Interventions

This session will provide specific guidance on using various forms of data to effectively make decisions for interventions. It will provide participants with research based strategies and practices to best support students who are experiencing difficulties in literacy. The participants will be able to effectively utilize data to make decisions when identifying students, using diagnostic assessments, assigning interventions, and monitoring progress.

>> *Kristen Wells*

ROOM 207

Policy and Practices in Early Childhood

During this session, participants will be provided updates concerning guidelines and pedagogy in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

>> *Dr. Jill Dent, Monica May, and Joyce Greer*

ROOM 208

Co-Teaching: Specifically, Designed Instruction for SPED and General Education Teachers

Let's play ball! Discover your motivation and commitment to being "All In" serving struggling learners through a collaborative approach that focuses on utilization of standards to coordinate instruction.

>> *Christy Hunt*

ROOM 209

Stop "Reforming" Schools: Empower People

Most school reform initiatives are doomed to failure before the first day of implementation. Dr. Ross uncovers why attempting to improve a school's accountability report most often leads to marginal results. This session outlines proven strategies to empower school personnel and students. Empowering people to maximize their own potential will improve school outcomes. Participants will learn how to:

- Establish a common school vision aligned to the true meaning of education.
- Inspire the commitment of the faculty and staff.
- Provide opportunities for students to ignite their passion for learning.
- Analyze your educational program through the lens of the student.

>> *Dr. Akil Ross*

ROOM 210



AGENDA

Tuesday, July 9, 2019

- 7:00am – 9:00am** **Registration**
Continental Breakfast
Vendor Exhibits EXHIBIT HALL A
- 9:00am – 9:15am** **Welcome and Introduction of Keynote Speaker** BALLROOMS A-E
- 9:15am – 10:15am** **Keynote Address** BALLROOMS A-E
Creating Equity and Diverse Learning in the Classroom
Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings >> University of Wisconsin,
Professor Emerita, Department of Curriculum & Instruction
>> President, National Academy of Education
- 10:15am – 10:45am** **Break**
Vendor Exhibits EXHIBIT HALL A
Refreshments (Available upstairs and downstairs)
- 10:45am – 12:00pm** **Panel Discussion** BALLROOMS A-E
Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices
Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings >> University of Wisconsin
Dr. Tammie Causey Konaté >> Southeast Comprehensive Center
Dr. Saroja Warner >> WestEd
Dr. Erica McCray >> University of Florida/CEEDAR Center
Ms. Sandra Elliott >> Mississippi Department of Education
Moderator: Dr. Nichelle C. Robinson >> University of Mississippi
- 12:00pm – 12:30pm** **Closing Keynote** BALLROOMS A-E
Hannah Gadd-Ardrey >> 2019/2020 Teacher of the Year
- 12:30pm** **Adjourn**
- 1:00pm** **Post-Conference Session (Invitation Only)** ROOM 211
Educational Testing Service Luncheon
- 1:00pm – 4:00pm** **Post-Conference Activities (Invitation Only)** ROOM 205/206
Mississippi Teacher Residency Participants & Colleges/Universities
- 1:00pm – 4:00pm** **Post-Conference Activities (Invitation Only)** ROOM 210
Performance Based Licensure Participants

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



>> Hannah Gadd-Ardrey

Mrs. Hannah Gadd-Ardrey teaches music history, dual credit music appreciation and choir to 6th through 12th grade students. In August, she will begin her 5th year of teaching at Lafayette Middle School and Lafayette High School. Mrs. Ardrey is honored to serve as the 2019/2020 Mississippi Teacher of the Year where she hopes to promote the positive impact music can have on the lives of students, teachers and parents. She believes M.U.S.I.C. can be used as a tool to help Motivate, Understand, and Sculpt Independent Citizens in and out of the classroom by providing opportunities for collaborative growth while fostering a joy for learning about music and the world around them. Gadd-Ardrey received her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal music education in 2013 and her Master of Music degree in choral conducting in 2015, both from the University of Mississippi. She recently married Mr. Thomas Ardrey on June 8th, 2019, becoming Mrs. Hannah Gadd-Ardrey! They live in Oxford, Mississippi and enjoy singing in the choir together at St. Peter's Episcopal Church.



>> Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings

Gloria Ladson-Billings is Professor Emerita and former Kellner Family Distinguished Professor in Urban Education in the Department of Curriculum & Instruction and was Faculty Affiliate in the Departments of Educational Policy Studies, Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis and Afro American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is the current President of the National Academy of Education. She was the 2005--2006 president of the American Educational Research Association. Ladson-Billings' research examines the pedagogical practices of teachers who are successful with African American students. She also investigates Critical Race Theory applications to education.

Ladson-Billings is the author of the critically acclaimed books, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*, *Crossing over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms*, and *Beyond the Big House: African American Educators on Teacher Education*. She is editor of six other books and author of more than 100 journal articles and book chapters. She is the former editor of the *American Educational Research Journal* and a member of several editorial boards. Her work has won numerous scholarly awards, including the H. I. Romnes Faculty Fellowship, Spencer Post-doctoral Fellowship, and the Palmer O. Johnson outstanding research award. She is the 2015 winner of the Social Justice in Education Award given by the American Educational Research Association. She was named the 2012 winner of the Brock International Prize in education. In 2012 she was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Alicante, Alicante, Spain. In 2010 she was awarded an honorary degree from the University of Massachusetts - Lowell. In 2002 she was awarded an honorary doctorate from Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden. During the 2003--2004 academic year she was a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Stanford, California. In fall 2004 she received the George and Louise Spindler Award from the Council on Anthropology and Education for significant and ongoing contributions to the field of educational anthropology. In spring 2005 she was elected to the National Academy of Education and the National Society for the Study of Education. In 2007 she was awarded the Hildale Award, the highest faculty honor given to a professor at the University of Wisconsin for outstanding research, teaching, and service. She is a 2008 recipient of the state of Wisconsin's Martin Luther King, Jr. Heritage Award and the Teachers College, Columbia University 2008 Distinguished Service Medal. In 2009 she was elected to Kappa Delta Pi International Education Honor Society's Laureate Chapter—comprised of 60 living distinguished scholars. Former laureate members include notables such as Albert Einstein, John Dewey and Eleanor Roosevelt. Ladson-Billings is currently one of the NEA Foundation Fellows charged with providing advice on its "Achievement Gap Initiative." In 2014 she was a panelist on the White House's African American Educational Excellence Initiative's Essence Festival, "Smart Starts at Home" panel. In 2015 she received the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award from the Literacy Research Association. In 2016 she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Benjamin Banneker Association of the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics. In Fall 2017 she received the John Nisbet Award from the British Educational Research Association at the University of Sussex in Brighton, England. In April 2018 she received the American Educational Research Association's Distinguished Research Award and the Division B (Curriculum Studies) Lifetime Achievement Award. She was elected to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences in Spring 2018.

Ladson-Billings has an active community life that includes serving on several community boards such as the Urban League of Greater Madison, The Madison Children's Museum, the United Way of Dane County, and the Susan G. Komen for the Cure of Madison. She is a member of the Links, Inc. and a 50-year member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. At the 2017 Leadership Summit she was named the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. International Citizen of the Year. As an active member of the Mt. Zion Baptist Church of Madison, WI she is the 2nd woman named to the 108 year old church's Board of Deacons.

>> Monica Genta

Monica's goal is to transform teachers, leaders, and schools from seeing education as an ordinary job into an extraordinary adventure. Genta feels that every person who walks into a school deserves to love their experience! She is a believer in finding awesome and celebrating life every day! Genta is full of energy, full of passion, and full of love for helping others on their journey in life and learning.

She is the author of four books, *Game Changers* and *180 Days of Awesome*, *Crushing It For Kids*, and *The Rooted Classroom*, a middle school science teacher, and nationwide educational consultant and motivational speaker. Monica's TED talk has been viewed by thousands of educators from all over the world. She has earned a Masters in Curriculum & Instruction and a Masters in Educational Leadership & Administration and is a National Board Certified teacher.

In her free time, she enjoys long road trips, accomplishing new challenges, eating unique pizzas, and impromptu dance parties. She is pumped to share her life and experiences with you and is confident you will laugh along the way. Monica lives in Illinois and is surrounded by loving friends and family. Find out more at www.monicagenta.com or on social at @MonicaGentaEd.



>> Dr. Akil Ross

“He flunked the third grade. Now he's the best high school principal in the nation.” This was the headline from the local newspaper after he was announced the National Principal of the Year. Dr. Akil Ross' story is a testimony of the power education has to transform a struggling student into a high performing student. He teaches strategies for empowering students. As a high school principal, Dr. Ross, received many awards and recognitions the Palmetto's Finest Award, Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Lighthouse Award, several national rankings in academics from Newsweek, Niche, Washington Post and US News & World Report. His school earned 20 State Championships in eight Years (14 State Championships in Athletics, four State Championships in Marching Band and two NJROTC State Championship including one National Championship). As principal of Chapin High School, Dr. Ross was named the 2017 SC Secondary Principal of the Year and the 2018 NASSP National Principal of the Year. He was featured in The State Newspaper, 20 under 40, Class of 2017, Principal Leadership Magazine, The Rotarian Magazine and Columbia Business Monthly, 50 Most Influential, 2018. Dr. Ross is currently an Adjunct Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of South Carolina and is author of the book, *Empowering the Heart*. He started HeartEd LLC to share strategies to further his vision of a future where every community Empowers every child. Find out more at www.heartedllc.org or email Dr. Ross at aross@heartedllc.org.

PANELISTS



>> Dr. Tammie Causey-Konaté

Tammie Causey-Konaté, Ph.D., is deputy director of the Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) program, content expert with the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL), and a senior technical assistant consultant at American Institutes for Research (AIR). In this work, she supports state departments of education and program associates in the design and implementation of technical assistance for Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Dr. Causey-Konaté has nearly 30 years of experience in teacher and leader preparation for urban and rural educational contexts. Prior to joining SECC, she led research alliances with the Regional Educational Laboratories Southwest and Southeast—supporting educator effectiveness and charter school work. Dr. Causey-Konaté has international and regional experience in diversity and equity, cross-education system partnerships, and the postsecondary development of school leaders for urban and rural education contexts. She has served in several capacities in K–12 and higher education, including middle and high school English/ language arts teacher, assistant dean, associate professor (tenured), and doctoral program coordinator. Dr. Causey-Konaté holds a Ph.D. in educational administration from the University of New Orleans and is a co-editor of the recently released book *Called to Sankofa: Leading in, Through, and Beyond Disaster: A Narrative Account of African Americans Leading Education in Post-Katrina New Orleans* (2018).



>> Mrs. Sandra Elliott

Sandra Elliott has served as a classroom teacher for over 25 years for second grade through middle school in Ohio and in Mississippi. She has also served as an educational program facilitator and a building interventionist. Throughout her career, she has been dedicated to meeting the needs of English learners and struggling students. She is currently the English Learner Intervention Support Specialist for the Mississippi Department of Education (Pre-K -12). In this role, she provides professional development and technical support to teachers and administrators throughout the state on best practices, instructional guidelines, intervention strategies and instructional strategies to support English learner students.



>> Dr. Erica McCray

Dr. Erica D. McCray is an Associate Professor of Special Education at the University of Florida. Currently, Dr. McCray is a Co-Director for the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center and an OSEP leadership preparation grant, Project Studying Teacher Effectiveness, Education, and Policy (STEEP). She's also a co-Principal Investigator on an NSF project aimed to broaden participation in engineering. Prior to becoming university faculty, Dr. McCray served as a special educator for students with behavioral and learning disabilities in Title I elementary and middle school settings. She has been recognized on multiple levels for her teaching and research, which focus on the influence of diversity in educational practice and policy.



>> Dr. Saroja Warner

Dr. Saroja Warner started her career in education as a high school social studies teacher in Montgomery County Public Schools where she taught for 15 years, earned National Board Certification in 2004 and recertified in 2013. She is currently Co-Director of the Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center (MACC) where she helps build the capacity of states and school districts to develop and successfully implement education policy and practices to support equitable and positive outcomes for all learners. Saroja is a leading expert on the research and evidence based related to school and district improvement, educator diversity and effectiveness, assessment and accountability, early learning and college and career readiness. Prior to joining the WestEd team, Saroja was the Director of Teacher Workforce Initiatives at the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). There she led several national initiatives including the Network for Transforming Educator Preparation (NTEP) and launched the Diverse and Learner-Ready Teachers Initiative (DLRT). Prior to that she served as the Chief for Educator Preparation Program Approval at the Maryland State Department of Education and as Senior Director for Performance, Measurement and Research at the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). Although not in the high school classroom anymore, Saroja continues to teach at the University of Maryland in the very program that prepared her to be a teacher, and where she earned her doctorate, to support the development of tomorrow's culturally responsive teachers.

SESSION PRESENTERS

>> Krilesha Boyd

Krilesha Boyd is 4th grade teacher at Northeast Lauderdale Elementary in the Lauderdale County School District. She has been teaching at this school for fourteen years. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Mississippi State University, a Master's Degree in Elementary Education from William Carey University, and she is also a National Board-Certified Teacher in Early Childhood Literacy.

>> Elise Brown

Elise Brown is a mathematics Professional Development Coordinator for the University of Mississippi/Mississippi Department of Education. Brown has been an educator in Mississippi for 12 years specializing in middle and high school mathematics. She received her Master of Education Degree in K-12 Educational Leadership in 2015 from The University of Mississippi and is currently working towards her Doctorate in the same area.

>> Dr. Ben Burnett

After a 28-year career in K-12 education as a band director, middle school principal and superintendent, Dr. Ben Burnett retired from public education on June 1, 2014 and accepted the position of Dean of the School of Education at William Carey University. Dr. Burnett holds a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Music Education and a Ph.D. in Administration.

>> Alfie Clark

Alfie Clark serves as a Coordinator of School Improvement Programs in the Office of School Improvement at the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE). In this position, she supports the systemic improvement of the lowest performing schools and districts in the State of Mississippi. In addition, she provides support for CSI, ATSI, TSI and School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools through the MCAPS and MS SOARS platforms. Ms. Clark has served 20 years in education as a teacher, science academic coach, elementary science curriculum specialist, district test coordinator, middle school curriculum coordinator, and middle school assistant principal.

>> Sharon Coon

Sharon Strong Coon is currently employed with the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education as the Office Director of District Support and Professional Development in the Office of Special Education. Ms. Coon has been with MDE since June 2015. Prior to employment with MDE, Ms. Coon was a special education teacher for five years and worked at the Madison County School District Office of Special Services as a behavior specialist for five years. Ms. Coon holds a degree in elementary education and special education.

>> Dr. Marla Davis

Marla Davis, Ph.D., NBCT, is a veteran educator with almost 20 years of experience in secondary education. As the Bureau Director for Secondary Curriculum and Instruction at the Mississippi Department of Education, Dr. Davis's roles include overseeing the development and implementation of curricular and instructional materials aligned to the MS CCRS in all core content areas (Mathematics, ELA, Science, Social Studies, and Fine Arts); on-site professional development and technical assistance to K-12 teachers; evaluating existing programs to improve classroom instruction and student achievement; designing and assisting in national promotion, mentorship, and selection of state-level finalists for the PAEMST award; assisting with the development of middle school efforts; and, monitoring of SREB college and career readiness courses at the middle and high school levels.



>> **Dr. Jill Dent**

Dr. Jill Dent is the Director of the Office of Early Childhood for the Mississippi Department of Education. She manages the pre-k and kindergarten initiatives for MDE and is building the foundations of a new office for the Department. Dr. Dent has worked in the early childhood field for over 25 years. As the previous Director of the Office of Early Childhood Care and Development with the MS Department of Human Services (MDHS), she managed the Child Care Development Funds and the Healthy Homes MS home visiting program. Prior to this position, she managed the child welfare data system at MDHS, managed state and federal grants at various non-profits, and managed and taught in early learning environments for many years.

Dr. Dent earned a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Administration from Jackson State University, a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership and Administration from William Carey University, and a B.S. in Child and Family Studies from the University of Southern Mississippi.

>> **Dr. Stacey Donaldson**

Dr. Stacey Donaldson is a 21-year educator currently serving as President of Learn ELation Consulting. Nationally certified in career and technical education, Donaldson has been involved in some aspect of mentoring and supporting teachers for more than ten years. A 2015 Milken Fellow and 2010 Mississippi State Teacher of the Year, Donaldson spent 12 years in the K-12 classroom and now shares her expertise with

teachers across the state and nation. Donaldson has coached teachers virtually through the Teacher Leadership Initiative and as a professor of practice at Mt. Holyoke College. She continues to collaborate with teachers across the nation as she hosts and facilitates virtual learning sessions as Learn ELation partners with the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards and National Network of State Teachers of the Year. Donaldson has a Ph.D. in education specializing in educational technology.

>> **Whitney Drewrey**

Whitney Drewrey is the Mississippi 2018-2019 Teacher of the Year. She teaches in the Lafayette County School District in Oxford, Mississippi. Whitney has been teaching for 16 years. She found her true passion when she started teaching students with special needs and severe disabilities. She returned to school at that time to obtain her master's in special education and is currently working on her specialist in emotional and behavioral disorders.

>> **Joyce Greer**

Joyce Greer is an Early Childhood Instructional Specialist employed with the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Elementary Education and Reading- Early Childhood Division. During her career she has served as an Educational Consultant, Project Coordinator for T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood MISSISSIPPI, a technical assistant specialist, an elementary school teacher and an instructional assistant. Joyce

has provided early childhood professional development training and facilitated meetings for several early childhood organizations both in the state of Mississippi and nationally. Joyce is a former National Board Early Childhood Generalist with a Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Administration, Management and Leadership, a Master's Degree in Elementary Education, a Certified Pre-Kindergarten CLASS Observer, K-3 CLASS Observer and a K-3 CLASS Trainer.

>> **Leslie Holloway**

Leslie B. Holloway is currently a third-grade educator in Pearl Public School District. She has taught third through sixth grades throughout her more than fifteen years in the field of education. Originally from Hattiesburg, MS, she holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from The University of Southern Mississippi, Master of Science in Reading Education from Jackson State University, and currently holds her Administrative License with the State of Mississippi. Ms. Holloway was honored to be selected by Mississippi Department of Education to serve on the 2015 Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards Review Committee. Throughout her career, Ms. Holloway has served on various school and district curriculum teams, school interview committees, and leadership teams. She has served as after school tutor, grade chair, school club sponsor, and coordinated and conducted numerous parent workshops. Ms. Holloway's goal is to promote education in the lives of all students.



>> Christy Hunt

Christy Hunt is currently a Professional Development Coordinator for MDE and has traveled the state to present for Mississippi teachers. Prior to her current position, she was employed as an advocate for Disability Rights. She has worked as a rehabilitation counselor for Vocational Rehabilitation where she piloted the pre-employment transition services model with the school system. She has worked as an educator in general education and special education classrooms with emphasis on developing inclusion-based programs for over fifteen years. Christy Hunt has a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, a master's degree in Curriculum and Leadership, and additional endorsements in Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling.

>> Ashley Kazery

Ashley Kazery is the State ELA Director with the Mississippi Department of Education. Ashley specializes in English Language Arts at the Elementary and Middle school setting. She has

been a classroom teacher, lead teacher, curriculum coordinator, and professional development coordinator throughout her career in education. Ashley is currently working towards a Doctorate Degree in Educational Leadership with an emphasis in curriculum and instruction from Mississippi College. She lives in Clinton with her husband and two boys.

>> Toni Kersh

Toni Kersh is currently the Bureau Director for the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement. She has approximately 28 years of experience in the field of education with over 21 years with the Mississippi Department of Education. Mrs. Kersh received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Communicative Disorders from Jackson State University in 1988 and a Master of Science Degree in Communicative Disorders from the University of Mississippi in 1990. Mrs. Kersh has worked as a Language/Speech Pathologist for Lafayette County School District, Magnolia Speech School, and Jackson Public School District prior to accepting a position at the Mississippi Department of Education. She has worked in the areas of special education, compulsory school attendance, alternative education, GED Option, counseling, and dropout prevention at the department. She also provides training and technical assistance in the areas of the "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Foster Care Educational Stability Requirements", Chronic Absenteeism and "Mandated Reporting" for child abuse and neglect.

>> Tamika Lipsey

Tamika Lipsey is from Jackson, Mississippi and attended Forest Hill High School in Jackson Public School District. After graduating, she continued her education at Mississippi College where she received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. During her tenure at Mississippi College, she began working at the Mississippi Department of Education. She began employment twelve (12) years ago as a receptionist and advanced to her current role as Assistant Director in the Division of Educator Licensure.

>> Brittany Massey

Brittany Massey is currently a seventh-grade math teacher at Pearl Junior High School. She has just completed her ninth year of teaching in the public-school system. Brittany received her Bachelor's and Master's Degree from The University of Mississippi. After graduation, she began her career in DeSoto County School District, teaching sixth grade math at Horn Lake Middle School, where she looped with her students and taught them again in the seventh grade. After two years of teaching, Brittany decided to move back home to Brandon, Mississippi and continue her teaching career at Pearl Public School District. Brittany has been teaching seventh grade math at Pearl Junior High School for the past seven years. Brittany is a member of the Mississippi Council of Teachers of Mathematics and serves as the Mathematics Department Chair for Pearl Junior High School.

>> **Monica May**

Monica F. May currently serves as the Assistant Director of Early Childhood at the Mississippi Department of Education. She has served in the field of early childhood for over twenty-five years in multiple capacities such as teacher, non-profit administrator, early childhood care and education director, early childhood coach, early childhood supervisor, and a state level project director. She has a passion of empowering lifelong learning and the responsibility of modeling that not just for young children, but also educators, and other colleagues in the education community. She takes a holistic approach to facilitating the highest quality early childhood practices to best serve the whole child, family, and education communities. She is a Pre-k Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) reliable observer.



>> **Deowarski McDonald**

Deowarski McDonald serves as the Coordinator of School Improvement Programs in the Office of School Improvement at the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE). In this position, he supports the systemic improvement of the lowest performing schools and districts in the State of Mississippi. In addition, he provides support for CSI, TSI, ATSI, SAR, and School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools through the MCAPS and MS SOARS platforms. Mr. McDonald has served in education for 17 years as a teacher, middle school level administrator, high school principal and adjunct professor.

>> **Anna Morris**

Anna Morris is the 2016 Mississippi State Teacher of the Year. She is passionate about Teacher Leadership, Teachers in Policy, and Project Based Learning. She is an Education.Com Fellow and a 2017 Lowen Milken Center Fellow. She teaches second grade in Hattiesburg, MS.

>> **Phelton Moss**

Phelton “Cortez” Moss graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Public Policy and English. Following Ole Miss, he joined the prestigious Teach for America program and was placed in Greenwood, MS at Greenwood High School to teach High School English. For two consecutive years, he earned the distinction of Teacher of the Year. During the summer of 2013, he served as Teacher in Residence at the Mississippi Department of Education working on Innovative High Schools and the Third Grade

Gate Exam. In 2014, he joined the Clarksdale Municipal School District as a Literacy and Data specialist serving Kirkpatrick Health and Medical Science Magnet Elementary School before assuming the role as Assistant Principal at Clarksdale High School. Moss assumed the role of a turnaround Principal of Quitman County Middle School in Marks, MS. Currently, he is working at the Mississippi Department of Education as the Bureau Director of the Division of Educator Effectiveness and Talent Acquisition. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Mississippi.

>> **Jennifer Robinson**

Jennifer Robinson has worked at MDE since 2016 and currently serves as the NAEP State Coordinator in the Office of Student Assessment. She has worked in education for 19 years as a classroom teacher, literacy coach, district administrator, and professional development consultant.

>> **Allison Ruhl**

Allison Ruhl is an experienced educator with a passion for providing outstanding instruction for children of all ages, successful problem solving, and curriculum development. She currently serves as a Literacy Specialist in Madison County Schools and is based at one of the district’s middle schools. Ms. Ruhl holds a Bachelor of Arts from Duke University, a Master of Education in Elementary Education from Mississippi College, a specialist degree in

Educational Leadership from William Carey University and is currently pursuing her doctorate in Educational Leadership. She is also a nationally board-certified teacher and loves to help other teachers reach their own professional goals. Ms. Ruhl has earned local and national awards for her work in education and was selected as a Milken Educator in 2017. Helping over 200 children learn to read is her biggest professional achievement. She is most importantly, though, the lucky mother of three amazing daughters--Ainsley, Ella and Reese—and two bad dogs.

>> **Dr. Howard Savage**

Howard Savage has been involved in public education for over 10 years. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi. He later pursued a Masters in Educational Leadership and his Specialist in Instructional Leadership at William Carey University. Dr. Savage went on to complete his Doctorate in Educational Leadership at William Carey University where his research focused on school culture. He was named the Administrator of the Year for Mississippi in 2018.

>> **Dr. Darien Spann**

Darien Spann began his teaching career at Morrison Academic Advancement Center September 2004. Throughout the years, he taught English at Murrah High School, Magee High School and Vicksburg High School. He is currently serving as one of the Assistant Principals at Starkville High School. He holds a Bachelor of Art in English, master's degree in

education, and recently graduated in May 2019 from the doctorate program at Mississippi College in education leadership.

In addition to teaching, he serves a strong advocate and voice for educators and students by recently serving 6 years on the boards of the National Education Association and the Mississippi Association of Educators, Vice President of the Mississippi Association of Educators; written editorials on behalf of educators that were published in the Clarion Ledger. He has served on numerous committees for MDE including two years on Dr. Wright's Teacher Advisory Council and the Teacher Leadership Committee.

He has served as a presenter for MDE including two years at the Beginner Teachers' Conference. As a 15-year educator, he sees so many opportunities and growth for public education. He realizes the one way to get there is for all shareholders to work together to ensure we are preparing young people to be college and/or career ready in this ever-changing world.

>> **Chandrea Walker**

Chandrea Walker is the Director of Counseling & Support Services for the Mississippi Department of Education. She has worked in education for over 15 years in various capacities. Chandrea holds the National Certified Counselor (NCC) and National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) credentials. Her present focus is ensuring that school counselors and student service coordinators have the necessary resources to enable their students in graduating ready for college and career.

>> **Kristen Wells**

Kristen Wells' service in the field of education spans 15 years. Her experience in the classroom includes teaching 1st and 2nd grade, as well as serving as a Kindergarten through 5th grade Intervention Specialist. She has also spent several years as a new teacher mentor.

Ms. Wells previously served as a literacy coach for the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), a Regional Literacy Coordinator, and currently serves as an Assistant State Literacy Coordinator. She is the co-creator of the "Passport to Literacy" and "Passport to Literacy Boost" PreK-2nd grade literacy professional development training for teachers. During the 2016-2017 school year, she co-produced the MDE's Literacy Focus of the Month in Action instructional videos featuring literacy coaches and students in Mississippi classrooms. During the 2017-2018 school year, she began working with coaches to increase the rigor and consistency of writing instruction in kindergarten through sixth grade classrooms through the development and implementation of writing galleries. Currently, she serves as a member of the Mississippi Reading Licensure Task Force and the Governor's Task Force for Teacher Preparation in Early Literacy Instruction.

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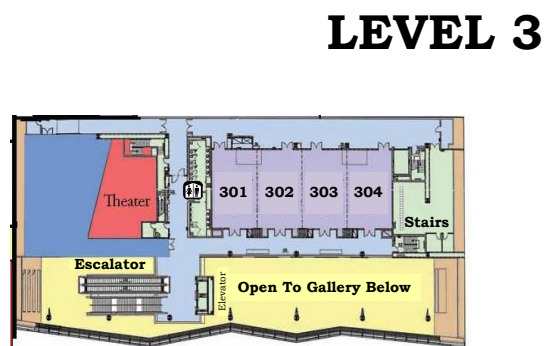
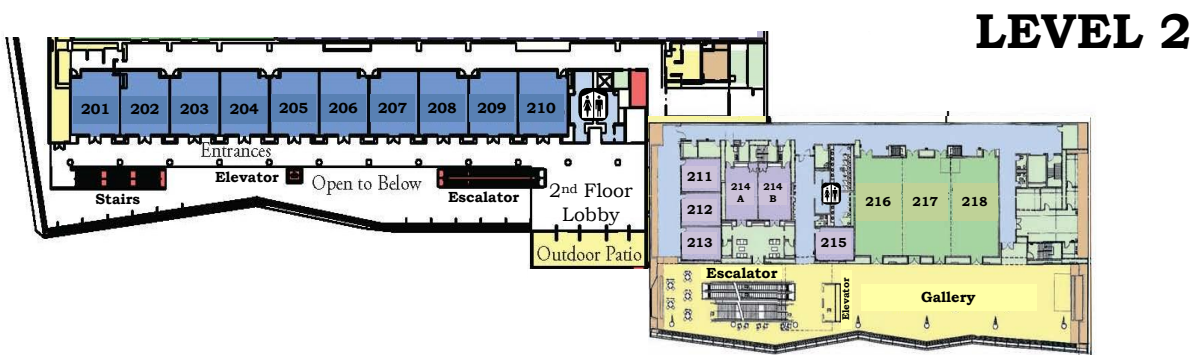
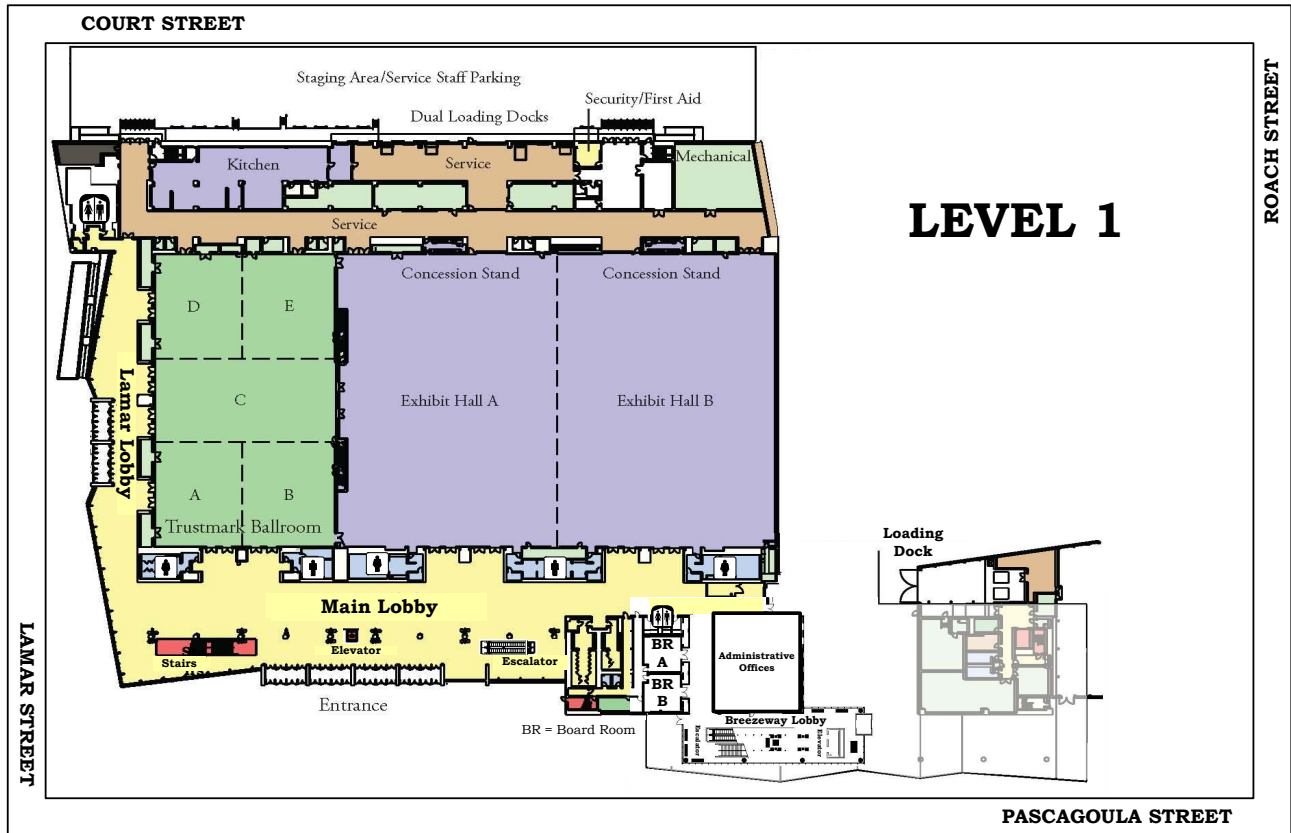
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