



**Minutes of the  
Commission on School Accreditation  
Regularly Scheduled Meeting  
Central High School Building  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor Board Room  
359 North West Street  
Jackson, Mississippi  
August 16, 2016  
10:00 a.m.**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation (CSA or Commission) took place at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, August 16, 2016. The Commission members present in the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Board Room of the Central High School Building, 359 North West Street, Jackson, Mississippi included: Chuck Blackwell, Sean Brewer, Dr. Lee Childress, Sara Foster, Roy Gill, Ann Jones, Michael Lindsey, Dr. Valencia Martin, Michael Miller, John Mistilis, Anthony Montgomery, Eddie Prather, Robert Tyner, and Heather Westerfield. Kenny Bush did not attend.

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), Office of Accreditation staff members present included: Dr. J.P. Beaudoin, Chief, Research and Development, Dr. Paula Vanderford, Executive Secretary, Erin Meyer, Special Assistant Attorney General, Brenda Shelby, Teresa Jones, Ken Stamps, and James Thompson. Other MDE staff present included Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent, Dr. Bill Welch, Jean Massey, Walt Drane, Brooks Little, Dr. Shuntina Johnson, Pete Smith, Patrice Guilfoyle, and Jean Cook.

**I. Call to Order and Invocation**

Dr. Childress, Chair of the CSA, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and Eddie Prather delivered the invocation.

Dr. Childress recognized Dr. Wright and two (2) Mississippi Olympic medalists.

**II. Adoption of Agenda**

Dr. Childress asked the Commission members to review the agenda they received previously. On a motion by Ann Jones, seconded by Sarah Foster, the Commission unanimously approved the agenda.

**III. Approval of the minutes of the April 7, 2016, Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation**

Dr. Childress asked the Commission members to review the minutes from the April 7, 2016, regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation they received previously. On a motion by Roy Gill, seconded by Sean Brewer, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the April 7, 2016, regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation.

**IV. Approval of the minutes of the April 19, 2016, Special-Called Teleconference Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation**

Dr. Childress asked the Commission members to review the minutes from the April 19, 2016, special-called teleconference meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation they received previously. On a motion by Michael Lindsey, seconded by John Mistilis, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the April 19, 2016, special-called teleconference meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation.

**V. Approval of the minutes of the July 13, 2016, Special-Called Teleconference Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation**

Dr. Childress asked the Commission members to review the minutes from the July 13, 2016, special-called teleconference meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation they received previously. On a motion by Eddie Prather, seconded by Ann Jones, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the July 13, 2016, special-called teleconference meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation.

**VI. Approval of the minutes of the July 21, 2016, Special-Called Teleconference Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation**

Dr. Childress asked the Commission members to review the minutes from the July 21, 2016, special-called teleconference meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation they received previously. On a motion by John Mistilis, seconded by Sean Brewer, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the July 21, 2016, special-called teleconference meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation.

**VII. Discussion to substitute Computer Science in lieu of the current Business and Technology requirement for graduation**

Jean Massey discussed the proposed revision to Appendix A of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2016*. Beginning in school year 2016-2017, approximately 32 school districts began offering Computer Science to 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. The Office of Secondary Education will add schools to this pilot over the next three (3) years until all school districts have phased in Computer Science K-12. During this transition period, students will have the option of using either Technology or Computer Science to meet the current Business and Technology requirement needed for graduation.

**VIII. Approval to substitute Computer Science in lieu of the current Business and Technology requirement for graduation**

On a motion by Anthony Montgomery, seconded by Sean Brewer, the Commission unanimously approved the substitution of Computer Science in lieu of the current Business and Technology requirement for graduation.

**IX. Discussion to revise the business rules of the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System to include the recommended cut scores beginning in school year 2015-2016**

Dr. J. P. Beaudoin provided the rationale for the proposed revisions to the business rules of the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System. Dr. Beaudoin presented an overview of the standard setting process, which was required as a result of the new assessments administered 2015-2016 Grades 3 through 12 and the two (2) new components of the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System for schools/districts with Grade 12 for school year 2015-2016. The cut scores for performance classifications A through F for the 700 point system, 1000 point system, and districts were determined by percentiles. Dr. Beaudoin presented the percentiles recommended by the Accountability Task Force for performance classifications A through F, as well as MDE recommendations to increase the cuts for A and F. Dr. Beaudoin also discussed the rationale for clarifications for the business rules for Section 9: Acceleration and Section 25: College and Career Readiness indicators, which are the two (2) new components for schools/districts with Grade 12 for school year 2015-2016.

**X. Approval to revise the business rules of the Mississippi Statewide Accountability System to include the recommended cut scores beginning in school year 2015-2016**

On a motion by Sean Brewer, seconded by Ann Jones, the Commission unanimously approved the cuts scores (percentiles) set for performance classifications A through F, as recommended by the Accountability Task Force.

**XI. Approval to downgrade the accreditation status of the Jackson Public School District from ACCREDITED to PROBATION**

Dr. Paula Vanderford presented an overview of the findings of the unannounced audit that MDE conducted in the Jackson Public School District (JPSD) April 4-22, 2016. The preliminary report of findings indicated JPSD failed to comply with Accreditation Policy 2.1 and twenty-one (21) of the twenty-nine (29) process standards that MDE evaluated during the audit process. As previously stated, following the response from the District, the MDE verified compliance with two (2) process standards and a portion of a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) process standard. As of today's date, the JPSD is noncompliant with Accreditation Policy 2.1, nineteen (19) of twenty-nine (29) process standards reviewed, as well as multiple federal and state laws, and State Board of Education policies.

This report is being made to the Commission on School Accreditation (CSA) in accordance with Accreditation Policy 2.5 of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2015*. The current Accreditation Policy 2.5 outlines the eight (8) areas for an immediate downgrade to PROBATION or WITHDRAWN, which are considered the most serious violations of process standards.

Dr. Vanderford noted that the JPSD is in violation of five (5) of these eight (8) areas:

- Reporting false information (Accreditation Policy 2.1);
- Failure to implement appropriate standards of governance (Process Standards 1, 1.1, and 1.3);
- Failure to comply with school board policies that meet state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations (Process Standard 1.2);
- Failure to comply with graduation requirements (Process Standard 14);
- Failure to comply with standards that sustain a safe school climate (Process Standards 29, 30, and 31).

However, the rationale to downgrade the JPSD's accreditation from ACCREDITED to PROBATION is based on noncompliance with Process Standard 14: Graduation Requirements and Process Standards 29, 30, and 31: Failure to comply with standards that sustain a safe school climate.

\*\*Sean Brewer left the meeting at 1:57 p.m.

On a motion by Roy Gill, seconded by Rob Tyner, the Commission unanimously approved the downgrade of accreditation status for the Jackson Public School District from ACCREDITED to PROBATION.

The Commission held a discussion regarding the need to conduct a full investigative audit of the Jackson Public School District.

On a motion by Ann Jones, seconded by Anthony Montgomery, the Commission voted 7-5 in favor of conducting a full investigative audit of the Jackson Public School District. The members voting aye were: Roy Gill, Ann Jones, Michael Lindsey, Michael Miller, John Mistilis, Anthony Montgomery, and Eddie Prather.

The members voting nay included: Chuck Blackwell, Sara Foster, Dr. Valencia Martin, Rob Tyner, and Heather Westerfield. Dr. Lee Childress, Chair, abstained from voting. Members absent: Sean Brewer and Kenny Bush.

## **XII. Discussion and Approval of meeting dates through June 30, 2017**

On a motion by John Mistilis, seconded by Ann Jones, the Commission unanimously approved the meeting dates through June 30, 2017.

## **XIII. Other Business**

Dr. Lee Childress recognized Dr. Valencia Martin and Sarah Foster as the two (2) new members of the Commission on School Accreditation.

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**XIV. Adjournment**

On a motion by Ann Jones, seconded by Roy Gill, the Commission unanimously approved the motion to adjourn at 2:31 p.m.

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION:

10      18      2016  
(Month)      (Day)      (Year)

Edward Lee Clackson  
Chair of the Commission

[Signature]  
Executive Secretary of the Commission