

OFFICE OF STATE SUPERINTENDENT
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
November 10, 2022

OFFICE OF DISTRICT TRANSFORMATION

- 02 Action: Approval of a new five-member advisory board for the administration of the Tunica County School District [Goal 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

Executive Summary

Under Mississippi Code Ann. § 37-17-13(4), as the State Board of Education makes preparation to return a District of Transformation to local control, the State Board of Education is authorized to appoint a new five-member board for the administration of the school district. The newly appointed local school board members will serve in an advisory capacity to the interim superintendent for its first year of service and thereafter shall have full responsibility to administer the school district, including the appointment of a superintendent to govern the reconstituted or reorganized school district.

Individuals being recommended for appointment have submitted applications for consideration and participated in an interview process.

This item references Goal 6 of the *Mississippi Board of Education 2018-2022 Strategic Plan*.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

Background Information and Proposed Timeline Tunica County School District Advisory Board

1. June 16, 2022: State Board of Education (SBE) approved to initiate the process to return the Tunica County School District and authorized MDE to proceed with applications for the Tunica County School District Advisory Board.
2. June – August 2022: Advertised for residents to apply for potential appointments to the new Tunica County School District Advisory Board of Education.
3. September – October 2022: Applications were reviewed. In-person interviews were conducted October 24 and 25, 2022.
4. November 10, 2022: SBE to consider recommendations for the new Tunica County School District Advisory Board.
5. January 1, 2023: New five (5) member advisory board takes office, serving in an advisory capacity from January 1 – December 31, 2023. Prior to December 1, 2023, “each member shall draw lots to determine when the board members shall rotate off.”
6. November 2023: SBE may request the Governor to lift the State of Emergency in the TCSD.
7. January 1, 2024: Tunica County School District Board assumes control.

Proposed Tunica County School District Advisory Board Members with Bio Information

District 1 – Ms. Evelyn W. Hubbard

Ms. Evelyn W. Hubbard is a native of Tunica and long-time paster of the Commerce Boulevard Christian Church. She received an A.A. in Business from Draughton's College in Memphis, Tennessee. She is also active in the Tunica County Visitor's Bureau, the Tunica County Library Board, and serves as the Treasurer for the local Tunica County NAACP Chapter.

District 2 – Mr. Clifton Johnson

Mr. Clifton Johnson has a B.S. from the University of Mississippi. He has 38 years of experience in accounting, audit, banking, and finance. He served 8-years as a Senior auditor for the State of Mississippi, Department of Audit. He also served 18 years as Chief Financial Officer and County Administrator for Tunica County, Mississippi. He is currently working as an agent for New York Life Insurance.

District 3 – Ms. Carol Dunaway Gill

Ms. Carol Dunaway Gill has a B.S. from the University of Southern Mississippi and a M.S. from the University of Mississippi. She is a lifelong resident of Tunica. She has 41 years of experience in private business with primary responsibility for personnel recruitment, evaluation, and professional development. She retired in 2018 and is currently serving in a volunteer role at election polls, COVID vaccine drives, and grief counseling.

District 4 – Mr. Marcus Autry

Mr. Marcus Autry has a B.S. from Auburn University, a M.S. from Jackson State University, and an Education Specialist from Union University. He has 21 years of experience in Mississippi schools as teacher, coach, principal, and central office administrator. He is currently working in the South Panola School District.

District 5 – Dr. Valarie Davis

Dr. Valarie Davis has a B.S. from Mississippi Valley, a M.S. and Education Specialist from Delta State University, and an Ed.D. from Liberty University. She has 15 years' experience as a teacher, principal, and central office administrator. She won District Principal of the Year seven times. She was awarded Community Leader three times. She is currently retired.

West's Annotated Mississippi Code
Title 37. Education
Chapter 17. Accreditation of Schools

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-17-13

§ 37-17-13. School district abolition; liability for debts

Effective: July 1, 2020

Currentness

(1) Whenever the Governor declares a state of emergency in a school district in response to a certification by the State Board of Education and the Commission on School Accreditation made under [Section 37-17-6\(12\)\(b\)](#), the State Board of Education, in addition to any actions taken under [Section 37-17-6](#), may abolish the school district and assume control and administration of the schools formerly constituting the district, and appoint an interim superintendent to carry out this purpose under the direction of the State Board of Education. In such case, the State Board of Education shall have all powers which were held by the previously existing school board, and the previously existing superintendent of schools or county superintendent of education, including, but not limited to, those enumerated in [Section 37-7-301](#), and the authority to request tax levies from the appropriate governing authorities for the support of the schools and to receive and expend the tax funds as provided by [Section 37-57-1 et seq.](#) and [Section 37-57-105 et seq.](#)

(2) When a school district is abolished under this section, loans from the School District Emergency Assistance Fund may be made by the State Board of Education for the use and benefit of the schools formerly constituting the district in accordance with the procedures set forth in [Section 37-17-6\(15\)](#) for such loans to the district. The abolition of a school district under this section shall not impair or release the property of that school district from liability for the payment of the loan indebtedness, and it shall be the duty of the appropriate governing authorities to levy taxes on the property of the district so abolished from year to year according to the terms of the indebtedness until same shall be fully paid.

(3) After a school district is abolished under this section, at such time as the State Board of Education determines that the impairments have been substantially corrected after a period of maintaining a “C” accountability rating for five (5) consecutive years, unless the State Board of Education determines that the district is eligible to return to local control in less than the five-year period, the State Board of Education shall reconstitute, reorganize or change or alter the boundaries of the previously existing district; however, no partition or assignment of territory formerly included in the abolished district to one or more other school districts may be made by the State Board of Education without the consent of the school board of the school district to which such territory is to be transferred, such consent to be spread upon its minutes. At that time, the State Board of Education, in appropriate cases, shall notify the appropriate governing authority or authorities of its action and request them to provide for the election or appointment of school board members in the manner provided by law. In the event the applicable statute provides that vacancies in an all-elected membership of the school board will be filled by appointment by the remaining members of the school board and no members of the school board remain in office, the Governor shall call a special election to fill the vacancies. In such situations, the Governor will set the date of the special election and the election will be conducted by the county election commission. The State Board of Education shall also request the governing authority or authorities to provide for the appointment of a superintendent or superintendents to govern the reconstituted, reorganized or changed district or districts, which such appointed position shall apply in all school districts including those school districts in which the position of superintendent was previously an elected office. A board member or superintendent in office at the time the Governor declares a state of emergency in a school district to be abolished shall not be eligible to serve in that office for the school district reconstituted, reorganized or changed after the Governor declares that an emergency no longer exists.

(4) As an alternative to the procedure set forth in subsection (3), in the event a local school board is abolished by the State Board of Education pursuant to this section, after the State Board of Education determines that the impairments are being substantially corrected and the responsibility of the district transformation in such district upon the conclusion of the final scholastic year in which a district has maintained a “C” accountability rating for five (5) consecutive years, unless the State Board of Education determines that the district is eligible to return to local control in less than the five-year period, the State Board of Education may appoint a new five-member board for the administration of the school district and shall notify the local county board of supervisors and/or municipal governing authority of such appointment, spreading the names of the new school board members on its minutes. The new local school board members shall be residents of the school district. The new local school board members appointed by the State Board of Education may serve in an advisory capacity to the interim superintendent for its first year of service and thereafter shall have full responsibility to administer the school district. Thirty (30) days prior to the end of the first year of office as an advisory board, each member shall draw lots to determine when the members shall rotate off the board as follows: one (1) member shall serve a one-year term of office; one (1) member shall serve a two-year term of office; one (1) member shall serve a three-year term of office; one (1) member shall serve a four-year term of office; and one (1) member shall serve a five-year term of office. At that time, the State Board of Education shall notify the appropriate board of supervisors or municipal governing authority of this action and request them to provide for the election or appointment of school board members at the end of the terms of office in the manner provided by law, in order for the local residents of the school district to select a new school board on a phased-in basis. In such situations, the Governor will set the date of any necessary special election which shall be conducted by the county election commission. The State Board of Education shall also request the new school board to provide for the appointment of a superintendent to govern the reconstituted or reorganized school district, including those school districts in which the position of superintendent was previously an elected office. A board member or superintendent in office at the time the Governor declares a state of emergency in a school district shall not be eligible to serve in the office of school board member or superintendent for the school district reconstituted or reorganized following the district transformation period.

This subsection (4) shall stand repealed from and after July 1, 2023.

Credits

Laws 1996, Ch. 302, § 2, eff. May 14, 1996. Amended by Laws 1999, Ch. 421, § 4, eff. June 1, 1999; Laws 2007, Ch. 518, § 2, eff. July 23, 2007; Laws 2012, Ch. 525, § 2, eff. Sept. 24, 2012; Laws 2013, Ch. 331 (H.B. No. 975), § 1; Laws 2013, Ch. 363 (S.B. No. 2779), § 1; Laws 2015, Ch. 485 (S.B. No. 2558), § 1, eff. July 1, 2015; Laws 2017, Ch. 439 (S.B. No. 2431), § 2, eff. July 1, 2017; Laws 2020, Ch. 340 (S.B. No. 2509), § 1, eff. July 1, 2020.

Editors' Notes

REPEAL

<This section is repealed by its own terms on July 1, 2023.>

EFFECTIVE DATE

<This section was amended effective upon effectuation under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. See [Shelby County, Ala. v. Holder, 2013, 133 S.Ct. 2612, 186 L.Ed.2d. 651.](#)>

Notes of Decisions (5)

Miss. Code Ann. § 37-17-13, MS ST § 37-17-13

The Statutes and Constitution are current with laws from the 2022 Regular Session effective through April 26, 2022. Some statute sections may be more current, see credits for details. The statutes are subject to changes provided by the Joint Legislative Committee on Compilation, Revision and Publication of Legislation.

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