

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
January 17, 2019

OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION

- 01.C. Action: Consideration of the appeals of the final accountability results under Policy 3.1.4 of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2018* [Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 – MBE Strategic Plan]

01.C. Pascagoula-Gautier School District

Background Information: On October 11, 2018 the SBE approved the 2017-2018 Mississippi Statewide Accountability results, with the exception of four (4) schools with special populations, three (3) schools within the Corinth School District and the Corinth School District. On November 8, 2018 the State Board of Education approved the final accountability results for the Corinth School District, the three (3) schools within the Corinth School District and the four (4) schools with special populations. The Office of Accreditation received appeals of the final results in accordance with Policy 3.1.4 of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2018* from three (3) of the Districts.

Pascagoula-Gautier School District appealed the results for one (1) school, Pascagoula-Gautier Exceptional School.

On December 10, 2018, the Internal Review Committee met to consider the appeal from the Pascagoula-Gautier School District and voted unanimously to deny the District's appeal.

The Commission on School Accreditation (CSA) met on January 10, 2019 in a special-called meeting to consider the Internal Review Committee's decision of the appeal. In accordance with Policy 3.1.4 of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2018*, each superintendent was given an opportunity to address the CSA during this meeting. After presentations by Mr. Wayne Rodolfich, Superintendent of the Pascagoula-Gautier School District, and the MDE, the CSA voted unanimously to grant the appeal to the Pascagoula-Gautier School District.

This item references Goals 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 of the *Mississippi Board of Education 2018-2022 Strategic Plan*.

Recommendation: Disapproval

In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-17-6, a simple "A," "B," "C," "D," and "F" designation, shall be applied to the current school and school district statewide accountability performance classifications. There is no provision in state law that provides for an exemption for special schools or special student populations. In addition to the requirements of state law, federal law and Mississippi's ESSA plan require inclusion of all schools in the accountability model. Violation of federal law could result in the loss of federal funding.

Back-up material attached



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Website: www.pgsd.ms

September 19, 2018

Dr. Carey Wright
Mississippi Department of Education
P. O. 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

SEP 21 2018

*Copy to:
Paula
please
prepare
a
response
for
me -
C*

RE: Jackson County Exceptional School – MAAP-A – School Rating of F

Dear Dr. Wright:

IDEA mandates that districts provide services to public education students who qualify for eligibilities per MDE guidelines. Placement decisions are not always easy, however; they are necessary to make sure that FAPE is provided and students are in an environment conducive to learning. The IEP committee, which includes parents/guardians, have the daunting task of making these decisions in the best interest of the child. To grade this school an F, a school which is designed to meet the individualized needs of a very specialized, highly involved population, sets a negative tone for students, parents, faculty, and the local community. While some parents worry about their child learning Fractions and/or Algebra 1, other parents are worried about their child touching a hot stove or being able to provide basic self-help skills for themselves. These are our most vulnerable citizens, our special pops.

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District provides FAPE to students entitled to IDEA in various settings throughout our district. Our continuum of services starts with inclusive settings, with supplemental supports and staff in place and moves through the special education continuum to the most restrictive setting. The most restrictive local setting is the Jackson County Exceptional School. In order to understand placement processes and procedures, I would like to share a brief synopsis about the JCES.

The Jackson County Board of Supervisors owns the Jackson County Exceptional School building and land. This facility/school has a \$350,000 playground designed for students with disabilities, a salt water swimming pool for water therapy, a sensory room, a grocery store, an augmentative communication library, and designated areas with changing tables and lifts to provide privacy and dignity for those who have changing needs. This school hosts many events and festivals. Our parents, families, staff, local public and private high schools, as well as businesses such as Chevron, Zachry, and Ingalls, participate as volunteers. We are building relationships within our communities, while providing educational services individualized to our communities most vulnerable children.

Three school districts share this building: Jackson County School District (JCSD), Moss Point School District (MPSD), and Pascagoula-Gautier School District (PGSD). The Jackson County Board of Supervisors has a contract that allows these districts and parents to collaborate, place, and provide services to IDEA students.

PASCAGOULA - GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

The PGSD has the privilege and honor to manage the Jackson County Exceptional School (JCES) and help provide FAPE, educational, and medical services to very involved and vulnerable students. Students range in age from 6-21, and must reside in one of the three districts in order for the JCES to be an option for placement consideration. Only students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD) are placed in this restrictive environment/separate school. One criteria for a student to be placed at the JCES is for his/her IQ to be under 60. The average IQ is approximately 50 among the 37 students. (100 is the average IQ on the bell curve. See attached)

Here are some brief facts about our setting and population. The JCES has 37 students. All districts transport to and from the facility. Currently JCES has 10 students from JCSD, 8 students from MPD, and 19 from PGSD. In terms of eligibility categories, 19 out of 37 have an eligibility of Multiple Disabilities (MD), 10 have an Autism (AU) eligibility, and 9 are Intellectually Disabled (ID). Many student have significant medical needs that are addressed by a full-time school nurse employed at the site. For example, 46% of the school's population has Seizure Disorders, and two students have feeding tubes. It is also important to note that this site is located behind Singing River Hospital. The staff and student population are also very diverse. The school's student population includes 16 white, 16 black, and 5 Hispanic students. Our staff are trained in a variety of techniques to address the functional, social, behavioral, academic, and emotional needs of this specific population. I have included some additional charts/graphs depicting specific information/data about our school (see below).

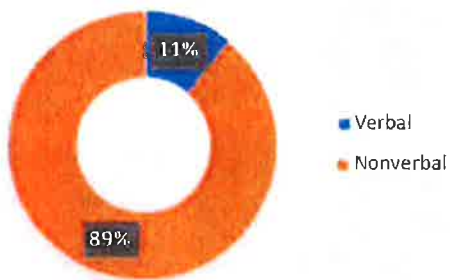
JCES School District-Student Representation



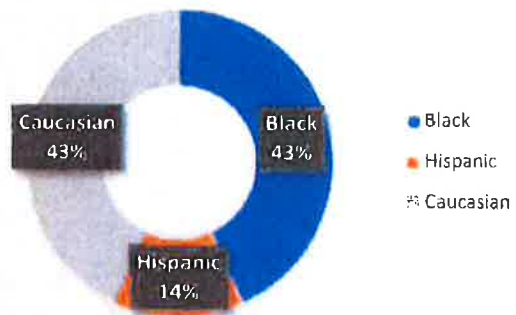
JCES Eligibility Categories



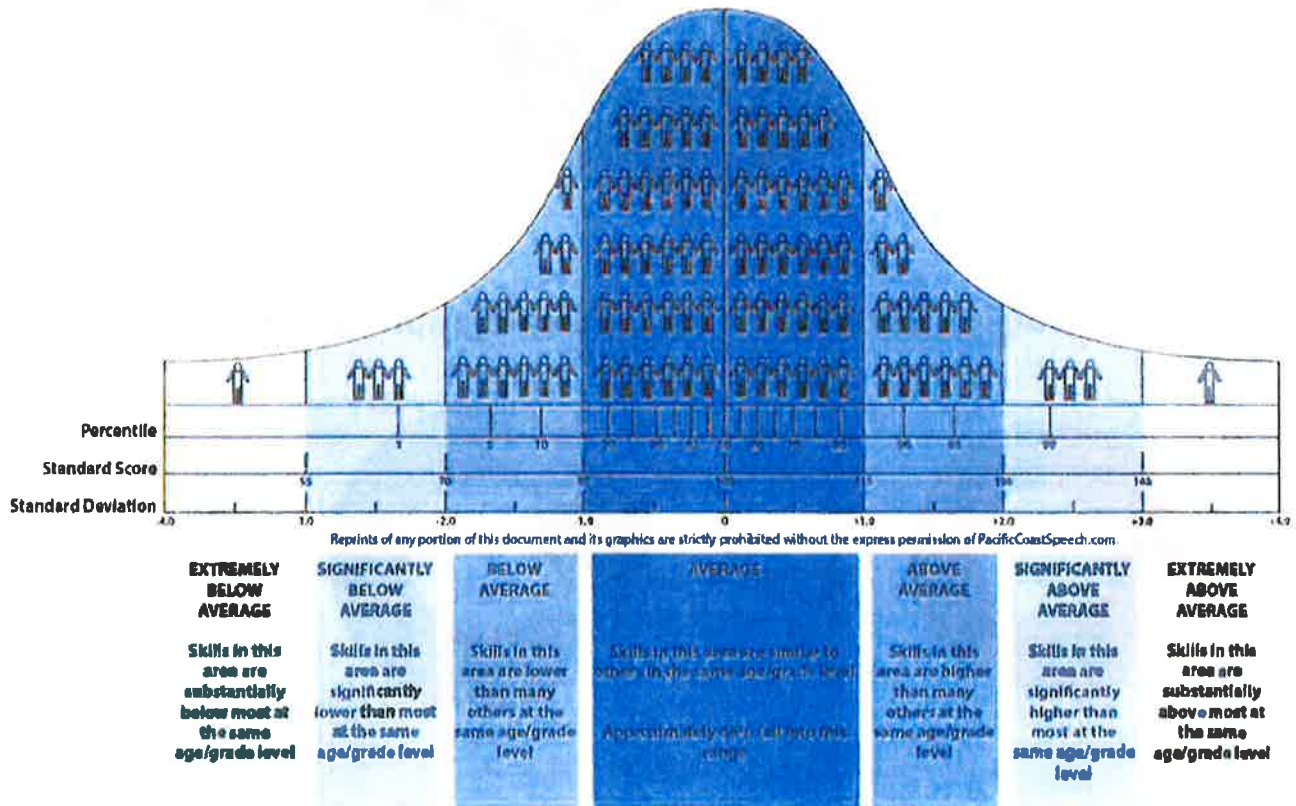
Verbal/Nonverbal



Demographics-Race



Bell Curve of Student Skills



Jackson County Exceptional School Staff 2018/2019

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Robert Rumpfelt -Principal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christina Page – Assistant Teacher
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leslie Beaugez –Certified Teacher	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tony Davis –Assistant Teacher
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As always, our goal is to provide services and supports for all students entitled to IDEA and to ensure that FAPE is provided to every student in his/her LRE. The services and supports at the JCES are designed to maximize student success for students with the most significant needs. The school administration and staff strive to ensure that every day offers rich and unique individualized learning opportunities for each and every student that we serve. We want to ensure that our students, staff, parents, and our community know that our district and the state recognizes these efforts and supports the JCES.

We appreciate your consideration in developing an alternate grading method for facilities and schools such as our EXCEPTIONAL School. Thank you again, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Wayne V. Rodolfich
Superintendent

America's Promise 100 Best Communities for Young People - 2010, 2011, 2012



Wayne V. Rodolfich
Superintendent

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PASCAGOULA - GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

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OF COUNSEL:

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³ALSO LICENSED IN AL, IL, WV AND TX.
⁴ALSO LICENSED IN LA, WV AND TX.
⁵ALSO LICENSED IN AL AND FL.

November 13, 2018

jmalone@mdek12.org

Dr. Jo Ann Malone, Executor Director
Mississippi Department of Education
Commission on School Accreditation
Post Office Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205

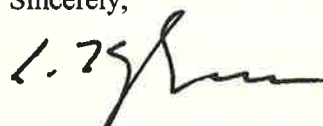
RE: Pascagoula-Gautier School District
School Rating of "F"

Dear Dr. Malone:

I am Board Attorney for the Pascagoula-Gautier School District. Attached please find a Request for Hearing before the Commission on School Accreditation.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



A. Kelly Sessoms, III

AKS/mq
Attachment

cc: Mr. Wayne Rodolfich, Superintendent (*via email*)
Mr. Mike Concannon (*via email*)

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SUITE 800
JACKSON, MS 39201

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OCEAN SPRINGS, MS 39564

BEFORE THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COMMISSION ON SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

REQUEST FOR HEARING

COMES NOW THE Pascagoula-Gautier School District ("PGSD" or "District"), by and through its Board of Trustees, and pursuant to Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards 6.1, requests a hearing before a duly authorized representative of the Commission on School Accreditation, and in support of said request would show unto the Commission the following, to-wit:

1. PGSD operates the Jackson County Exceptional School ("JCES" or "Exceptional School"), which provides services to students with a wide variety of special needs ranging from developmental delays to those with severe intellectual and cognitive disabilities. JCES serves students from Moss Point School District, Jackson County School District, and the Pascagoula-Gautier School District.

2. On or about September 19, 2018, in response to the District becoming aware that the Exceptional School would be given a rating of "F", Superintendent Wayne Rodolfich wrote to Dr. Carey Wright informing her of the school's background and services provided. Superintendent Rodolfich requested Dr. Wright's consideration in developing an alternate grading method for facilities and schools such as the Exceptional School. *(See letter dated September 19, 2018 attached to the Request as Exhibit "A").*

3. However, by notification via News Release of November 8, 2018, the State Board voted to assign an "F" grade to the Exceptional School. *(See News Release attached to the Request*

as Exhibit "B"). PGSD disagrees with the "F"-letter grade assigned to the Exceptional School and requests a hearing before the Commission on School Accreditation in accordance with 6.3 of the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards.

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Pascagoula-Gautier School District respectfully requests that this Request for Hearing be received by the Commission on School Accreditation and that a hearing be set in accordance with the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards.

PASCAGOULA-GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY:


A. KELLY SESSOMS, ATTORNEY FOR
PASCAGOULA-GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, A. Kelly Sessoms, III, Attorney for the Pascagoula-Gautier School District, do hereby certify that I have provided a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing Request for Hearing to Dr. Jo Ann Malone, Executive Director, Commission on School Accreditation, Post Office Box 771, Jackson, Mississippi 39205, jmalone@mdek12.org.

This the 13th day of November, 2018.

PASCAGOULA-GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY:


A. KELLY SESSOMS, ATTORNEY FOR
PASCAGOULA-GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Fax: 228.938.6528
Website: www.pgsd.ms

September 19, 2018

Dr. Carey Wright
Mississippi Department of Education
P. O. 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

RE: Jackson County Exceptional School – MAAP-A – School Rating of F

Dear Dr. Wright:

IDEA mandates that districts provide services to public education students who qualify for eligibilities per MDE guidelines. Placement decisions are not always easy, however; they are necessary to make sure that FAPE is provided and students are in an environment conducive to learning. The IEP committee, which includes parents/guardians, have the daunting task of making these decisions in the best interest of the child. To grade this school an F, a school which is designed to meet the individualized needs of a very specialized, highly involved population, sets a negative tone for students, parents, faculty, and the local community. While some parents worry about their child learning Fractions and/or Algebra 1, other parents are worried about their child touching a hot stove or being able to provide basic self-help skills for themselves. These are our most vulnerable citizens, our special pops.

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PASCAGOULA - GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT



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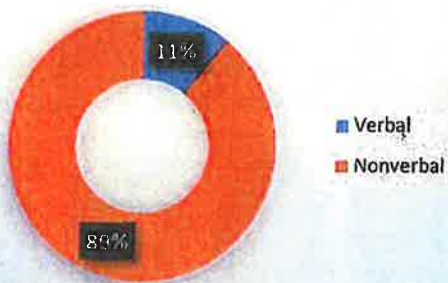
JCES School District-Student Representation



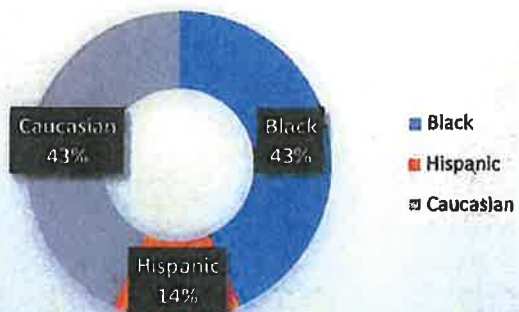
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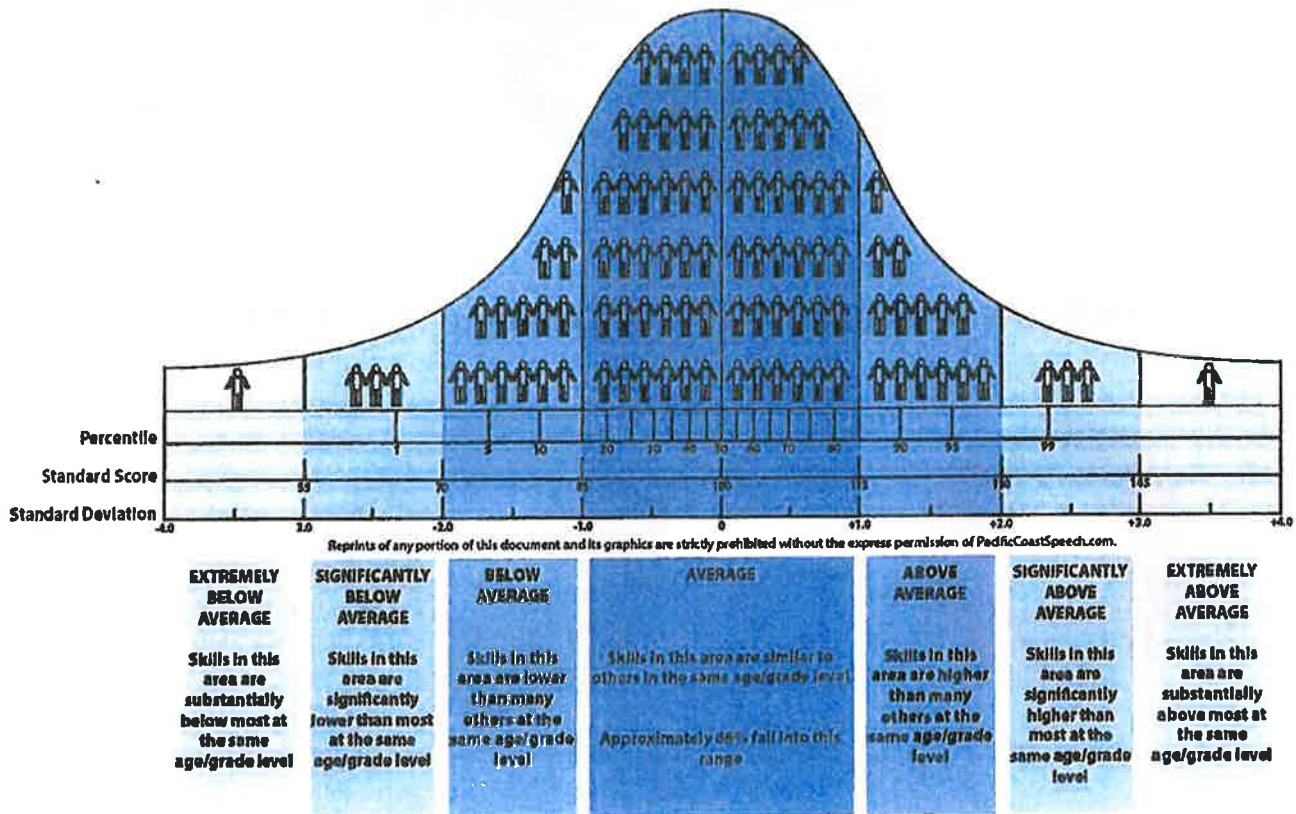
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Bell Curve of Student Skills



Jackson County Exceptional School Staff 2018/2019

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We appreciate your consideration in developing an alternate grading method for facilities and schools such as our EXCEPTIONAL School. Thank you again, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Wayne V. Rodolfich
Superintendent



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

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

Office of Communications & Government Relations

Patrice Guilfoyle, APR, Director of Communications *601-359-3706

Jean Cook, APR, Communications Specialist *601-359-3519

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: November 8, 2018

State Board Votes to Assign Grades to Corinth and Special Schools

JACKSON, Miss – The Mississippi State Board of Education (SBE) today voted to assign unofficial letter grades for the 2017-18 school year to four schools that serve students with disabilities and the Corinth School District. The schools and district had not received grades in previous years.

State and federal law mandate that all schools and districts be evaluated using a single accountability system. There are no exclusions for schools with special populations.

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that all students be included in measures of performance. The law requires those measures to be applied consistently so that schools that need improvement will be identified for support.

Accountability grades are based, in part, on how well students perform and progress from year to year on the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) tests for English language arts (ELA) and Mathematics. These tests are aligned to the Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards and are administered annually to students in grades 3-8 and in high school.

“State and federal laws require that all schools and districts be held to the same standard so that we have a clear picture of how well they are preparing students for the future,” said Dr. Jason Dean, SBE chair.

Unofficial grades for the schools and district are as follows:

Central High School Building ☐ 359 North West Street ☐ P.O. Box 771 ☐ Jackson, MS 39205-0771





**MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION**

Ensuring a bright future for every child

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

Office of Communications & Government Relations

Patrice Guilfoyle, APR, Director of Communications *601-359-3706

Jean Cook, APR, Communications Specialist *601-359-3519

School/District	Unofficial Grade	Grade with EL*
Mississippi School for the Deaf	F	F
Mississippi School for the Blind	F	F
Harrison County Child Development Center	F	F
Pascagoula-Gautier School District Exceptional School	F	F
Corinth School District	C	D
Corinth High School	F	F
Corinth Middle School	C	C
Corinth Elementary School	D	D

** Schools and districts are assigned a grade that does not include the new English Learner (EL) component; however, the grade including the EL component is also reported.*

###

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DAVID W. DOGAN, III
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² LICENSED IN TX ONLY
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November 16, 2018

jmalone@mdek12.org

Dr. Jo Ann Malone, Executor Director
Mississippi Department of Education
Commission on School Accreditation
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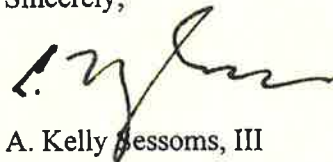
RE: Pascagoula-Gautier School District -
Jackson County Exceptional School
School Rating of "F"

Dear Dr. Malone:

In supplement to the appeal filed November 13, 2018, enclosed please find additional materials which I would appreciate being considered by the Office of Accreditation and District and School Performance and the Commission on School Accountability. These materials are being submitted following my conversation with Honorable Erin Meyer, Assistant Attorney General, earlier this week.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,


A. Kelly Sessoms, III

AKS/mq
Attachments

cc: Mr. Wayne Rodolfich, Superintendent (*via email*)
Mr. Mike Concannon (*via email*)
Ms. Polly Sumrow (*via email*)

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BEFORE THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COMMISSION ON SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

SUPPLEMENTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF APPEAL

The Pascagoula-Gautier School District ("PGSD"), has appealed pursuant to the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards regarding the "F" rating assigned to the Jackson County Exceptional School ("JCES"). The following is submitted in supplement of the appeal pursuant to 3.1.4 of the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards 2018.

PGSD respectfully requests that the JCES not receive a grade or School Performance Classification. As noted in the Commission on School Accreditation Minutes of September 18, 2018:

XI. Discussion: District/School Performance Reports and District/School Performance Classification for School Year 2017-2018.

Alan Burrow presented the results of the 2017-2018 Mississippi State-Wide Accountability System for schools and districts.

Discussion: Roy Gill ask for clarity on how schools with "0" in some of their components were graded *and expressed concerns about schools whose purpose is to serve students with exceptional needs being rated an "F"*. Mr. Burrow explained that all schools are required to get a grade by the State for performance pay for teachers and that ESSA doesn't allow for exceptions for sub-groups such as students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD).

Eddie Prather agrees that it is problematic to assign special schools an "F". Roy Gill stated that he would like to see the grades of these schools suppressed before they go to press and is concerned that "unofficial" doesn't mean much to the media.

Michael Lindsey and Anthony Montgomery asked if these schools could be given a "NG" or an "N/A" this year until we could find out another way to report them. Dr. Oakley explained that ESSA requires they received a grade, but that it may be a topic for the Accountability Task Force to consider.

Anthony Montgomery stated that he believes we need an accountability model for special schools such as MSB/MSD.

See September 18, 2018 Minutes of Commission on School Accreditation attached as Exhibit "A".

As noted in the Minutes attached as Exhibit "A", Commissioners had concerns about grading schools who serve students with exceptional needs. PGSD agrees with Mr. Montgomery's comments that there needs to be an accountability model for special schools such as the Mississippi School for the Blind, Mississippi School for the Deaf, and JCES. Similar comments have been expressed at the Federal level.

A few commenters asserted that it was inappropriate to assess students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, even using an AA-AAAS and appropriate accommodations, believing these assessments are outside such students' range of ability.

Volume 81, Federal Register No. 236, December 8, 2016.

In the State of Texas, the Austin Independent School District operates the Rosedale School, which is similar to JCES in serving children with severe special needs. Following the F-rating assigned to the Rosedale School, the Austin Independent School District filed an appeal to the Texas Education Agency. *See letter of September 13, 2018 from AISD, Office of Superintendent.*

In that letter, the AISD Superintendent expressed the following:

A label of Not Rated has been assigned to Rosedale School in 21 of the past 24 years. Since 2011, year to year changes to the components of the state accountability system and the Assessment Design for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities have resulted in uncertainty and unnecessary stress for the Rosedale School community regarding state ratings. We recognize the appeal process as the mechanism to address these unique issues, but wish to point out that the three-month period between the public release of a preliminary rating of improvement required and the outcome of an appeal is demoralizing for Rosedale families and staff and detracts from the real work of this school.

Please consider our request to assign a label of Not Rated to Rosedale School, now and in the future.

See letter of September 13, 2018 of AISD attached as Exhibit "B".

Similarly, PGSD requests that the Commission on School Accreditation and State Board of Education assign a Not Rated label to JCES due to its unique circumstances and the special population it serves.

Florida law allows for exemption from state-wide, standardized assessments involving certain students with disabilities. FSA Section 1008.212 states that:

A student with a disability for whom the Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team determines is prevented by circumstance or condition from physically demonstrating the mastery of skills that have been acquired and/or measured by the state-wide standardized assessment, a state-wide standardized end of course assessment, or an alternate assessment pursuant to S.1008.22(3)(c) shall be granted an extraordinary exemption from the administration of the assessment.

Also, FSA Section 1008.22 allows for a permanent exemption approved by the Florida Commissioner of Education for those children meeting the definition of a child with medical complexity or a child who, based upon medical documentation from a physician licensed under Chapter 458 or Chapter 459 is medically fragile and needs intensive care due to a condition such as a congenital or acquired multi-system disease; has a severe neurological or cognitive disorder with marked functional impairment; or is technology dependent for activities of daily living; and lacks the capacity to take or perform on an assessment. FSA Section 1008.22(11). See also *Drew v. Florida Department of Education*, 202 So 3d 951 (D.C.A. Fla 2016). (Florida Department agreed to grant permanent exemption to parent's daughter based on her medical complexity.)


Even though Federal and State law contain provisions for the assessment of children with severe disabilities, PGSD requests that the Commission on School Accreditation not assign an F-rating to the JCES. Alternatively, PGSD requests that the Commission and/or State Board of Education remove the F label until such time as administrative or legislative changes can be made to correct the inherent unfairness of assessing children with severe cognitive disabilities in the

same manner as other students. As has been shown in sister states of Texas and Florida, flexibility in assigning a performance rating to exceptional schools and their individual students may be considered. Accordingly, PGSD requests that the Commission on School Accreditation and the Mississippi State Board of Education enter a decision or ruling removing the F grading from the JCES.

PGSD Superintendent Wayne Rodolfich may present additional argument and a power point presentation before the Commission on School Accreditation at such time as scheduled by the Commission.

PASCAGOULA-GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY:


A. KELLY SESSOMS, III


CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, A. Kelly Sessoms, III, Attorney for the Pascagoula-Gautier School District, do hereby certify that I have provided a true and correct copy of the above and foregoing Request for Hearing to Dr. Jo Ann Malone, Executive Director, Commission on School Accreditation, Post Office Box 771, Jackson, Mississippi 39205, jmalone@mdek12.org.

This the 16th day of November, 2018.

PASCAGOULA-GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY:


A. KELLY SESSOMS, III

A. Kelly Sessoms, III, Attorney (MS BAR No. 9466)

ksessoms@dwwattorneys.com

Dogan & Wilkinson, PLLC

Post Office Box 1618

Pascagoula, MS 39568

Telephone: (228) 762-2272

Facsimile: (228) 762-3223

Commission on School Accreditation-MINUTES
September 18, 2018

Alan Burrow, Jean Cook, and Dr. Nathan Oakley also attended.

I. Announcement of Quorum and Call to Order

Heather Westerfield, Chair of the CSA, opened the Commission meeting and conducted a roll-call of the Commission members.

Heather Westerfield, Chair
Kelle Barfield
Sean Brewer
Roy Gill
Brian Harvey
Michael Lindsey
Michael Miller
John Mistilis
Anthony Montgomery
Eddie Prather

Attending via teleconference:

Dr. Valencia Martin, Greenwood, MS¹

The following members did not attend:

Kenny Bush
Sarah Foster
Ann Jones
Rob Tyner

Ms. Westerfield announced that a quorum of the Commission existed.

Ms. Westerfield called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Eddie Prather gave the invocation.

II. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Westerfield asked the Commission members to review the agenda they received previously. On a motion by Brian Harvey seconded by Michael Miller, the Commission unanimously approved the agenda.

III. Action: Approval of the minutes of the June 7, 2018 Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation

¹ Dr. Martin joined the meeting via teleconference at 10:15 a.m. during the discussion of Item X.



Commission on School Accreditation-MINUTES
September 18, 2018

On a motion by Sean Brewer, seconded by Eddie Prather, the Commission unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2018 meeting.

IV. Action: Approval of the minutes of the June 14, 2018 Special-Called Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation

On a motion by Roy Gill, seconded by Kelle Barfield, the Commission unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2018 special-called meeting.

V. Action: Approval of the minutes of the July 18, 2018 Special-Called Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation

On a motion by Sean Brewer, seconded by Michael Lindsey, the Commission unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the July 18, 2018 special-called meeting with the correction noted by Anthony Montgomery in reference to his name.

VI. Action: Approval of the minutes of the August 14, 2018 Special-Called Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation

On a motion by Michael Miller, seconded by Kelle Barfield, the Commission unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2018 special-called meeting.

VII. Action: Approval of the minutes of the August 22, 2018 Special-Called Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation

On a motion by Brian Harvey, seconded by Michael Lindsey, the Commission unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2018 special-called meeting.

VIII. Information: Recommended Annual District Accreditation Statuses for School Year 2018-2019 and Districts with Deficiencies in accordance with Accreditation Policies 2.0, 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2018*

Dr. Malone presented the recommended accreditation statuses for the 2018-2019 School Year.

Discussion: Roy Gill expressed some concern regarding the number of districts in violation of Process Standard 2 (Personnel) and how districts are struggling to find qualified staff to meet the requirements. Erin Meyer explained that the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development (Licensure Commission) is aware of the impact of the shortage of teachers across the state and is working to address the issue.

IX. Action: Approval of District Accreditation Statuses for 2018-2019

On a motion by John Mistilis seconded by Roy Gill, the Commission unanimously approved the approval of the recommended District Accreditation Statuses for 2018-2019.

X. Information: Report of the Internal Review of Preliminary Accountability Results in accordance with Accreditation Policy 3.1.3 of the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2018

Alan Burrow provided an overview of the results of the decisions of the Internal Review Committee's review of appeals of the preliminary accountability results. There were no changes that resulted from the decisions of the Internal Review Committee.

XI. Discussion: District/School Performance Reports and District/School Performance Classifications for School Year 2017-2018

Alan Burrow presented the results of the 2017-2018 Mississippi Statewide Accountability System for schools and districts.

Discussion: Roy Gill asked for clarity on how schools with "0" in some of their components were graded and expressed concerns about schools whose purpose is to serve students with exceptional needs being rated an "F". Mr. Burrow explained that all schools are required to get a grade by the state for performance pay for teachers and that ESSA doesn't allow for exceptions for subgroups such as students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD).

Eddie Prather agrees that it is problematic to assign special schools an "F". Roy Gill stated that he would like to see the grades of these schools suppressed before they go to press and is concerned that "unofficial" doesn't mean much to the media.

Michael Lindsey and Anthony Montgomery asked if these schools could be given a "NG" or an "N/A" this year until we can find out another way to report them. Dr. Oakley explained that ESSA requires they received a grade but that it may be a topic for the Accountability Task Force to consider.

Anthony Montgomery stated that he believes we need an accountability model for special schools such as MSB/MSD.

Sean Brewer expressed a concern about the EL component stating that none of the schools increased with the inclusion of the EL component. Therefore, he is concerned that it will be a negative impact going forward. He also asked if this component is concrete or if it is still up for discussion. Mr. Burrow explained that the EL component is still up for review but that the agency hopes to avoid resubmitting the ESSA plan.

Ms. Westerfield asked the EL component required. Dr. Oakley responded that it is, but there is some flexibility on how MDE implements it in the model.

XII. Action: Approval of District/School Performance Classifications for School Year 2018-2019 (based on School Year 2017-2018), with the Stipulation that the Information Continue to be Embargoed to the Public until September 20, 2018

On a motion by Sean Brewer seconded by Brian Harvey, the Commission voted to approve the District/School Performance Classifications for School Year 2018-2019 (based on School Year

Commission on School Accreditation-MINUTES
September 18, 2018

2017-2018), with the stipulation that the information continue to be embargoed to the public until September 20, 2018.

The following members voted aye:

Heather Westerfield, Chair
Kelle Barfield
Sean Brewer
Brian Harvey
Michael Lindsey
Dr. Valencia Martin
Michael Miller
John Mistilis
Anthony Montgomery
Eddie Prather

The following members voted nay:
Roy Gill

XIII. Information: Update from K-12 Attendance Center Accountability Task Force

Dr. Malone provided an update of the newly formed K-12 Attendance Center Task Force charged. The update included a list of members on the committee.

XIV. Other business

Dr. Malone reminded the Commission that the next meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2018.

XV. Adjournment

On a motion by Brian Harvey, seconded by Eddie Prather, the Commission unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION:

10 04 2018
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Heather Westerfield
Chair of the Commission

[Signature]
Executive Secretary of the Commission

Austin Independent School District

Office of Superintendent



September 13, 2018

Mr. Mike Morath, Commissioner of Education
Performance Reporting Department
Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress
Austin, Texas 78701-1494

Dear Commissioner Morath:

Rosedale School [227901251] is a specialty school in the Austin Independent School District [227901] located at 2117 W 49th Street in Austin, Texas. Rosedale offers a caring, family-focused community that supports the unique learning requirements of children with severe special needs. Through Rosedale's tailored educational opportunities and quality instruction, students increase their independence, improve their self-esteem and experience a greater quality of life.

Through the GO Project, a community-based transition program to move students from the high-school setting to a college or work environment, Rosedale also supports special education students who are 18 to 21 years old and have completed their graduation requirements at their home school. All Rosedale students graduate under the provisions of an Individualized Graduation Program (IEP).

This is an appeal of the 2018 preliminary rating of Improvement Required assigned to Rosedale School. There is ample evidence to establish that 33% of Rosedale annual graduates met the CCMR requirements of the 2018 state accountability system and that Rosedale would qualify for a 2018 rating of Met Standard. That evidence will be presented in the following documents. However, because of the unique circumstances of this school, we ask that the Commissioner assign a label of **Not Rated** to Rosedale School, for 2018 and in future years.

STAAR performance is a major component of accountability ratings, but at Rosedale STAAR results are not reflective of the work of the school. None of the Rosedale students take the regular STAAR; all qualify for the STAAR Alt2, the test designed for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. In 2017-18, of the 27 students enrolled in tested grade levels, 20 students could not take the assessments because they were unable to provide an authentic academic response. STAAR Alt2 assessments for these students are identified with a score code of *No Authentic Academic Response (NAAR)*. As a result, the STAAR component of the Student Achievement Domain was based on 17 STAAR Alt2 tests taken by just seven students. Likewise, the Student Progress Academic Growth score was based on ten tests taken by just six students.

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superintendent@austinisd.org www.austinisd.org



The pattern was similar in the two previous years. 21 of 34 students exhibited No Authentic Academic Response (NAAR) in 2016-17, and 17 of 34 students in 2015-16. For your reference, the eligibility criteria for a NAAR designation is shown below. To qualify as NAAR, an ARD committee must answer yes to at least one of the eligibility questions:

No Authentic Academic Response Eligibility Criteria	Select Yes or No
Because of multiple impairments, the student is unable to receive information during instruction and assessment. For example, the student may have a combination of visual, auditory, and/or tactile impairments.	Yes / No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
The student is consistently unable to provide an authentic academic response during instruction. His or her behavior may be described by one or more of the following characterizations:	Yes / No <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student is unable to demonstrate any observable reaction to a specific stimulus. • The student exhibits only startle responses. • The student tracks or fixates on objects at random and not for a purpose. • The student moves or responds only to internal stimuli. • The student vocalizes intermittently regardless of changes in environment around him/her. 	

A label of Not Rated has been assigned to Rosedale School in 21 of the past 24 years. Since 2011, year-to-year changes to the components of the state accountability system and to the assessments designed for students with the most severe cognitive disabilities have resulted in uncertainty and unnecessary stress for the Rosedale School community regarding state ratings. We recognize the appeal process as the mechanism to address these unique issues but wish to point out that the three-month period between the public release of a preliminary rating of Improvement Required and the outcome of an appeal is demoralizing for Rosedale families and staff and detracts from the real work of this school.

Please consider our request to assign a label of **Not Rated** to Rosedale School, now and in the future.

I certify by my signature below that the information included in this packet is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sincerely,

Paul Cruz, Ph.D.
Superintendent

PC/ch

Enclosures: Rosedale School and Go Project flyers
TEA forms: NAAR Eligibility and STAAR Alt2 Participation Requirements
Evidence of CCMR status of 2017 Rosedale graduates
Recalculation of domain scores

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"Independence Taught Here"



Rosedale School is a public AISD school serving kids from all over the district in Austin, Texas. It is unique in providing individually tailored programs to Austin's highest need special ed students.

Why our Students and Parents are Rosedale Proud



"I am Rosedale Proud because the Rosedale Foundation understood that quality of life for my daughter means having a voice. Savannah is non-verbal, but thanks to the Foundation, she can use a head switch to trigger a computer device that allows her to make choices, participate in class, and simply say hello. The Rosedale is making the community better - one student at a time." - Tamara, PTA Member, Rosedale Mom

"I am Rosedale proud because our son is surrounded by people that believe in him. They are determined to help him reach his maximum potential." - Kim, Rosedale PTA Member, Rosedale Mom





Office of Accreditation
Jo Ann Malone, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Paula A. Vanderford, Ph.D.
Chief Accountability Officer

December 11, 2018

Mr. Wayne Rodolfich, Superintendent
Pascagoula-Gautier School District
1006 Community Avenue
Pascagoula, MS 39568

Re: Special-Called Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation

Dear Mr. Rodolfich:

The Mississippi Department of Education's Internal Review Committee met on December 10, 2018 to consider the Pascagoula-Gautier School District's appeal of the 2017-2018 final (unofficial) accountability results. The committee voted unanimously to deny the Pascagoula-Gautier School District's appeal of the final (unofficial) accountability results for the Jackson County Exceptional School.

In accordance with Accreditation Policy 3.1.4 of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2018*, the district superintendent may request to address the Commission on School Accreditation (Commission) regarding the appeal of the final results.

During their December 6, 2018 regularly-scheduled meeting the Commission voted to hold a special-called meeting on **January 10, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.** to consider the appeals and the decision of the Internal Review Committee. During their meeting the Commission also voted to allow superintendents who wish to address the Commission a time limit of fifteen (15) minutes to do so. Therefore, we are asking you please confirm by December 21, 2018 if you wish to address the Commission at the special-called meeting on January 10, 2019.

Regards,

Jo Ann Malone, Executive Secretary
Commission on School Accreditation

CC: Dr. Paula Vanderford
Dr. Nathan Oakley
Erin Meyer, Special Assistant Attorney General
A. Kelly Sessoms, III, Esquire

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Office: 228.938.6491
Fax: 228.938.6528
Website: www.pgsd.ms

December 14, 2018

Dr. Jo Ann Malone, Executive Secretary
Commission on School Accreditation
Central High School Building
359 North West Street
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

RE: Special-Called Meeting of the Commission on School Accreditation

Dear Dr. Malone:

This letter is in reference to the Mississippi Department of Education's Internal Review Committee meeting on December 10, 2018 in regards to the Jackson County Exceptional School.

Please accept this correspondence as our confirmation to appear at the Special-Called meeting on January 10, 2019 at 10:00am. I appreciate the opportunity to address the Commission, and will be prepared to uphold the 15 minute time limit. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Wayne V. Rodolfich, Superintendent
Pascagoula-Gautier School District

PASCAGOULA - GAUTIER SCHOOL DISTRICT

29 of 29



Office of Accreditation
Jo Ann Malone, Ed.D.
Executive Director
Paula A. Vanderford, Ph.D.
Chief Accountability Officer

January 11, 2019

Mr. Wayne Rodolfich, Superintendent
Pascagoula-Gautier School District
1006 Community Avenue
Pascagoula, MS 39568

Re: Commission on School Accreditation's Review of Appeals of Final 2017-2018 (Unofficial) Accountability Results

Dear Mr. Rodolfich:

The Mississippi Department of Education's Commission on School Accreditation (CSA) met on January 10, 2019 to consider the Internal Review Committee's decision regarding the Pascagoula-Gautier School District's appeal of the 2017-2018 final (unofficial) accountability results. The CSA voted unanimously against the Internal Review Committee's decision, and instead, the CSA granted the Pascagoula-Gautier School District's appeal of the final (unofficial) accountability results for the Jackson County Exceptional School.

In accordance with Accreditation Policy 3.1.4 of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards, 2018*, the State Board of Education makes the final determination of the appeal's decision. The CSA's decision will be provided to the State Board of Education at its upcoming regularly scheduled meeting Thursday, January 17, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

Regards,

Jo Ann Malone, Executive Secretary
Commission on School Accreditation

Cc: Dr. Carey M. Wright
Dr. Paula A. Vanderford
Dr. Nathan Oakley
Erin Meyer, Special Assistant Attorney General, Counsel to the CSA

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