

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Services Guidebook

2025-26



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



Executive Leadership Team

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Accreditation

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WHAT WE DO

ADMINISTER the state's performance-based accreditation system for public schools and the accreditation system for nonpublic schools electing to seek accreditation from the State Board of Education

MONITOR school districts to verify compliance with applicable accreditation requirements through (1) investigative evaluations (complaints against school districts), (2) annual personnel data reports, and (3) reports from other state or federal programs

PROVIDE technical assistance and training on matters related to the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards*

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Accountability Standards

Access the current edition of the *Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards* at mdek12.org/OA/Accred

OFFICE

Career, Technical, and Workforce Education

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WHAT WE DO

CREATE and maintain secondary career and technical education (CTE) programs that are aligned to the 14 national career clusters

PROVIDE opportunities for CTE students to earn national industry certifications, complete quality work-based learning experiences, and build comprehensive professional portfolios

OVERSEE nine student organizations that allow students to build leadership skills and demonstrate occupational skills through competitions at the local, state, and national levels

OVERSEE all financial and audit responsibilities for CTE throughout Mississippi

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Carl D. Perkins Act

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act reauthorizes the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins) and is referred to as Perkins V. Perkins V aims to increase access to high-quality career and technical education (CTE) programs that meet the changing needs of students and employers. Perkins V gives states and local communities the opportunity to build and implement a vision for CTE that uniquely supports the

range of educational needs of students — exploration through career preparation — and balances those student needs with the current and emerging needs of the economy.

Mississippi Computer Science and Cyber Education Equality Act

The Mississippi Computer Science and Cyber Education Equality Act requires all K-12 schools to offer computer science instruction no later than the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year. The Office of Career and Technical Education offers several middle and high school CTE courses that fulfill the requirements of this legislation.

Mississippi Learn to Earn Act

The Mississippi Learn to Earn Act provides guidance and regulations for implementing apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities through the Work-Based Learning curriculum. The State Board of Education adopted State Board Policy 95.2 to align to the legislation.

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Child Nutrition

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WHAT WE DO

ADMINISTER USDA nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch & School Breakfast Programs, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and USDA Foods distribution

OPERATE the MS Statewide Purchasing System, providing over high quality, student-approved items at a substantial cost savings to schools and other participating organizations

PROVIDE training and technical assistance for staff of participating organizations

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Statewide Purchasing System

The Office of Child Nutrition (OCN) operates a statewide purchasing collective on behalf of Mississippi schools for food and supplies. OCN also offers optional opportunities to purchase produce, milk, and ice cream. Operating at a cost of a portion of a penny per meal, OCN removes the burden of bids and procurement from districts while providing food and supplies at lower cost using the purchasing power of nearly the entire state.

Mississippi Recipes for Success (MRS)

This free resource provides hundreds of recipes for use in school food service that have been thoroughly tested for yield, flavor and quality, and comply with all USDA nutrition standards. MRS is available in print or online format, with complete nutrient analysis for each recipe: mrs.mdek12.org

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

The SFSP reaches children who don't have access to healthy meals when school is out. The SFSP offers flexibility in meal types and service locations, with no minimum number of sites. Please contact our office to inquire about joining the SFSP or expanding your district's participation. View youtube.com/watch?v=yeFjYur4Bh8

Child and Adult Care Food Program

In addition to providing meals for childcare centers, Head Starts, and other child care organizations, CACFP may be utilized to provide afternoon and evening meals for students in school settings. MDE OCN staff can help you determine if your schools qualify for these meals.

Equipment Grants for Schools

The OCN administers multiple USDA Equipment grants which may be used to purchase critical kitchen equipment.

OFFICE

Communication & Government Relations

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WHAT WE DO

IMPLEMENT communication plans that support public education and advance the State Board of Education and MDE priorities

MANAGE agency-wide communication with school districts

WORK with lawmakers on education policy and laws

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

News Releases

All official news releases published by the Mississippi Department of Education are archived online at mdek12.org/OCGR/News

EdUpdate

EdUpdate is an email newsletter sent every Tuesday that includes important information, deadlines, opportunities, initiatives and professional learning opportunities for schools and districts. All published information is archived online at msachieves.mdek12.org/edupdate/administrator-news. If you are not receiving the EdUpdate, you may [subscribe](#) to be added to MDE's EdUpdate email list.

Social Media

Go to linktr.ee/mdek12 to follow MDE's social platforms, including Facebook, X, LinkedIn and YouTube and to access our websites including MDE's [main site](#), [Strong Readers](#), and [TeachMS](#).

Education-related Legislative Summaries

These summaries are posted during each legislative session and are available online at mdek12.org/GR

Communication Toolkits

MDE has created several communication toolkits to facilitate communication and awareness with parents and the community. The following toolkits are available for local level use at mdek12.org/OCGR/Home

Toolkit	Description
Attendance Awareness	These materials highlight the benefits of regular school attendance and emphasize ways to prevent students from being chronically absent.
Literacy Communication Toolkit	These resources help district leaders and K-3 principals train staff and communicate with families about the Mississippi Literacy-Based Promotion Act.
Mississippi Accountability System	These resources help explain to parents and communities how schools and districts are graded.
Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)	These resources help families understand Mississippi's statewide assessment system.
Mississippi High School Diploma and Endorsement Options	These materials inform parents and students about Mississippi's high school diploma requirements and opportunities to earn endorsements.

OFFICE

Compulsory School Attendance & Dropout Prevention

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WHAT WE DO

ENSURE that all students between the ages of 6-17 are enrolled and attending a public, private, or home school (MS. Code 37-13-91)

ENSURE that educational services are provided to youth in Juvenile Detention Centers (MS. Code 43-21-321)

ENSURE that educational services are provided for students placed in Alternative Education (MS. Code 37-13-92)

PROVIDE information regarding Mandated Reporting (MS. Code 43-21-353)

ENSURE that school districts comply with the Foster Care Enrollment Guidelines outlined in Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Mandated Reporting

Mandated Reporters are people who have a legal obligation to report suspected or known abuse of children. In Mississippi, everyone is a mandated reporter and is required to report suspected or known abuse to the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services. Any reports may be made through the following link: <http://reportabuse.mdcps.ms.gov> or by phone at (800) 222-8000.

Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care

Through educational stability, school districts can provide a powerful counterweight to the abuse, neglect, separation, and other barriers faced by foster care students. Federal and State Guidance are provided to support school districts in caring for foster care students. Collaborative efforts are encouraged between local school districts and child welfare agencies. Mississippi public school districts submit primary and secondary point of contact annually, which is published through the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) Office of Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement and Dropout Prevention. For more information, visit the links below:

Educational Stability Guidance: [foster_care_joint_guidance_2024.pdf](#)

Foster Care Point of Contacts: [Foster Care – Compulsory School Attendance Enforcement and Dropout Prevention](#)

Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) Education Programs

To ensure that academic and behavioral concerns are addressed, the Mississippi Department of Education has set standards for the provision of educational services in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws.

- Each district must have two points of contact to retrieve and disseminate student records, if requested, by any of the detention facilities.
- The sponsoring district, chosen by the youth court judge, is responsible for providing educational services to youth detainees.

Dropout Prevention

Mississippi is committed to improving the number of students who graduate each year ready for college and career. As required by state law, each school district shall implement an annual dropout prevention plan, and the plan must be approved by the local school board each year.

Alternative Education and High School Equivalency

Miss. Code Ann. §37-13-92, State Board Policy Chapter 7, Rule 7.1 - Rule 7.2 (High School Equivalency Guidelines), and Accreditation Standards 22 and 23 speak to Alternative Education and High School Equivalency. The alternative education program involves a temporary authorized

departure from the traditional school setting. It is designed to provide educational and social development for students whose behavior places them at risk of not succeeding in the traditional school structure and/or in adult life without positive interventions. Alternative Education Guidance Document can be found at https://mdek12.org/OCSA/AE_GED/

Chronic Absenteeism Report

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more (18 days) of the school year for any reason (unexcused/excused absences or suspensions). The current report can be found at mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting

OFFICE

District & School Performance

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WHAT WE DO

PRODUCE and report district and school accountability ratings that reflect performance through given indicators and identify schools and districts in need of support

FACILITATE the inclusion of stakeholders through the Accountability Task Force

ENSURE compliance with federal and state mandated accountability standards and reporting requirements

PROVIDE professional development and technical assistance to schools and districts

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Training and Resources

For training opportunities and up-to-date resources regarding accountability measures and accountability business rules, please visit the ODSP web page: mdek12.org/OA/ODSP

Accountability Reports

To find accountability and other data reports, please refer to mdek12.org/OPR/Reporting

Data Quality Improvement

Quality data from the district is very important to many accountability measures. District and school administrators should work to ensure the data entered in MSIS are timely and accurate and pay careful attention to deadlines for data entry.

Accountability Email List

Communications from the Office of District and School Performance are delivered via the accountability email list. If you do not currently receive email communications from our office, you may request to be added to the accountability email list by emailing your name and email address to tscott@mdek12.org

OFFICE CONTACT

Districts and Schools of Innovation

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WHAT WE DO

PRODUCE reports highlighting student outcomes based on innovative programs/plans

FACILITATE the District and School of Innovation program according to Mississippi Code Title 37. Education § 37-179-1

ENSURE compliance with state law and MDE accountability standards

PROVIDE professional development and technical assistance to schools and districts

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Innovation Application and Process

Applications for District of Innovation or School of Innovation, including early college high schools and middle college programs are due on December 1st for the following school year. Submit completed applications to InnovativePrograms@mdek12.org

OFFICE

Early Childhood Education

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WHAT WE DO

PROVIDE guidance, standards, and support for public school Pre-K settings

PROVIDE professional development, family engagement activities, and technical assistance to Pre-K teachers and administrators

COORDINATE and facilitate the Early Learning Collaborative Grant Program

COORDINATE and facilitate the State Invested Pre-K Grant Program

COORDINATE and facilitate the Blended Pre-K Grant Program

REPRESENT Early Childhood on various statewide committees and groups

COORDINATE and implement Preschool Development Grant (MS LIFT)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Early Learning Guidelines and Early Learning Standards

The guidelines include all the NIEER benchmarks with policy changes, except the coaching component which takes time and human capital to implement. The Early Learning Standards (for infants through four-year-old children) create an alignment of standards from birth through 12th grade.

Brigance

The Whole Child Kindergarten Readiness Assessment/Screeners is a developmental screening tool to be used in state funded Pre-K and blended classrooms as well as all other funded (e.g., Title I, local-funded, tuition-based) Pre-K classrooms to support early detection of delays in the development of children.

Program Quality Assessment

Schools providing services to children will receive an evaluation to ensure the quality and effectiveness of services on improving children's learning and well-being. Evaluation occurs for the Early Learning Collaboratives, Blended Grant Programs, and State Invested Pre-K classrooms. Evaluation consists of the Whole Child Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, Literacy Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, Classroom Assessment Scoring System, and monitoring. Please find the complete plan included in the Early Learning Guidelines for Classrooms Serving Three- and Four-Year-Old Children at <https://mdek12.org/earlychildhood/>.

Other Funded Pre-K Classroom Monitoring

Other funded pre-kindergarten classrooms following the Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Classrooms Serving Three- and Four-Year-Old Children must develop an internal procedure for monitoring their pre-kindergarten program. These classrooms are monitored utilizing Standard 17.2 when the school district is audited through the Educational Accountability Audit Service Providers (EAASP) with the Office of Accreditation. The Office of Early Childhood Education provides technical assistance to school districts.

Implementation of the Preschool Development Grant

This grant supports early learning teachers statewide in Pre-K settings to implement high-quality developmentally appropriate practices in classrooms. Major grant activities include professional learning and coaching support, Pre-K program evaluation to ensure program quality and student progress, implementation of developmental assessments for Pre-K students, and assistance with increasing family engagement in their children's education.

OFFICE

Educator Continuum

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WHAT WE DO

ASSESS current educator workforce needs with districts, universities, community colleges, workforce development centers, teacher academies, and grow-your-own programs to develop policy recommendations and/or programs

COLLABORATE with Educator Preparation Providers and coordinate program reviews and reporting to ensure effective teachers and leaders for all Mississippi schools

COORDINATE the implementation and training for the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System

PROVIDE in-person, on-demand, and online professional development statewide through the Regional Service Delivery and Professional Development Coordinator Models while guiding districts and schools through the creation of professional development plans

STUDY innovative pathways for educator workforce entry and analyze findings to develop recommendations for scale

COLLABORATE with the Divisions of Educator Licensure and Misconduct to support districts in attracting, supporting, and retaining effective educators

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Educator Workforce Development

The Mississippi Educator Shortage Survey launches annually in August for Superintendents or their designees. Results of the survey are then combined with key trends from the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Survey by Educator Workforce Specialists to convene education stakeholder groups to develop regionally-relevant workforce development strategies. Last year's Educator Shortage Survey results may be found at: <https://mdek12.org/talentacquisition/>

Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) Program Review

MDE strives to ensure “day-one ready” teachers and leaders by strengthening processes and developing strong data-sharing protocols that inform continuous improvement through EPP Program Reviews.

Mentoring and Induction Toolkit

MDE's Mentoring and Induction Toolkit is a free, user-friendly resource to assist districts and schools with strengthening supports for new teachers and teacher leaders. Among other resources, the toolkit includes mentor selection guidance, mentee observation and coaching protocols, and a monthly professional learning series for mentors and mentees that is aligned to PGS standards. The Mentoring and Induction Toolkit can be found at mdek12.org/OTL/OTC/TMP

Professional Growth System

The Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System (PGS) is designed to increase student achievement by providing teachers and administrators with feedback to inform continuous improvement. Districts will be required to submit annual employee performance data via MECCA by June 30, 2026. Training and technical assistance opportunities will be offered throughout the year to assist with PGS data submission. PGS resources and information may be found at: mdek12.org/OTL/OTC/professional-growth-system

PGS Training

Attending a PGS Combined Training is required prior to observing educators as outlined in the Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards. These application-based sessions focus on observation and coaching practice, score calibration, and implementing professional growth cycles. PGS training information may be found at: mdek12.trumba.com

Professional Development (PD) Catalog

Administrators may request face-to-face and virtual professional development outlined in the Professional Development Catalog: mdek12.org/OPD/home

Online PD

Teachers can register for free online courses each semester by visiting mdek12.org/OPD/Online

PD on Demand

Teachers and administrators can access bite-size chunks of professional development that are ideal for PLCs and professional growth. Information is available at: mdek12.org/OPD/PDOD

District and School Professional Development Plans

A template and sample plan that districts and school may use when developing their PD plans can be found by visiting mdek12.org/OPD/PDR

Performance-Based Licensure (PBL)

PBL is a nationally unprecedented effort to study and implement performance-based alternatives for educators who are positively impacting student outcomes yet face challenges in meeting licensure testing requirements. More information regarding eligible grades, subject areas, and application requirements for PBL may be found at mdek12.org/OEL/Performance-Based-Licensure

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Educator Licensure

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WHAT WE DO

ADMINISTER the licensing and verification of all educators and administrators working in Mississippi public schools

PROVIDE resources to assist school districts in maintaining compliance with state laws related to educator licensure

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Reminder

Required Submission of Appendix B: Annual Report Form for Superintendent of Education for Reporting Infractions Under Miss. Code Ann. §37-3-2 is due by October 1

Please submit the original completed notarized form via postal mail no later than the established deadline. For your convenience, you may access a copy of the current version of the Procedures for Reporting Infractions Handbook [page eight (8) represents the required form referenced herein] via the following web link: <https://mdek12.org/educatormisconduct/>

Please send an electronic copy of the completed, notarized form to Scott DeJong via email at sdejong@mdek12.org to expedite the updating of our records; and, submit the original notarized form via postal mail using the following address:

Mississippi Department of Education
Division of Educator Misconduct Evaluations
Post Office Box 771
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0771

Should you have questions, please contact Scott DeJong at sdejong@mdek12.org

Reminder: Important Dates Regarding Certain Licensure Application Types:

- February 1 of every year: Districts may begin submitting applications for district-requested license types for the upcoming school year.
- On or after March 1 of every year: Licensure application requests submitted on or after March 1 for initial licensure, reinstatement, and entry-level administrator status will be issued for the upcoming school year unless the applicant requests that the license be issued for the remainder of the current year.

Educator Licensure Update: Newly Approved Educator Preparation Provider (EEP)

The Mississippi State Board of Education granted approval for iTeach Mississippi to be established as a new Educator Preparation Provider (EPP). iTeach offers a competency-based educator preparation program that “combines the convenience of online learning with the support of face-to-face mentorship” comprised of eight, self-paced virtual pedagogical modules. Program entrance requirements established for non-traditional programs shall be met prior to program admittance. Candidates will be assigned a Mississippi-based field supervisor and an effective mentor teacher. Subject areas to be offered include Biology (7-12), Chemistry (7-12), Chinese (K-12), Elementary Education (4- 6), English (7-12), French (K-12), German (K-12), Latin (K-12), Mathematics (7-12), Physics (7-12), and Spanish (K-12).

More information about iTeach Mississippi is available at iteach.net

OFFICE

Elementary Education & Reading

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WHAT WE DO

DEVELOP elementary curriculum and instructional material aligned to the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards

MANAGE Intervention, Library Services, Literacy, Mathematics, Computer Science, Dyslexia, and Gifted services provided to schools and districts

PROVIDE technical assistance and professional development on the effective implementation of classroom instruction, intervention, and assessment

DEVELOP and publish resources to support districts, schools, administrators, teachers, and parents

DESIGN and deliver professional development and technical assistance to Pre-K through 12th grade school librarians, teachers, administrators, and Gifted Education programming

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Mathematics Coaching

For the 2024-2025 school year, mathematics coaching supports will be provided to school districts across the state by the MDE coaching team, and through a multi-year contract with Catapult Learning, LLC. All coaching supports will align to MDE Coaching Model and focus on HQIM implementation, the Core Actions of Mathematics in the Math Instructional Observation Protocol (MIOP), the Standards for Mathematical Practices (SMPs), and the Effective Mathematics Teaching Practices (EMTPs). For a list of math support schools, visit mdek12.org/secondaryeducation/mathematics

OFFICE

Federal Programs

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WHAT WE DO

PROVIDE leadership and guidance to ensure the effective and compliant use of federal funds to enhance student achievement and support education success.

MONITOR the implementation of federal program requirements and expenditures to ensure accountability, program quality, and alignment of federal regulations

SUPPORT state and local reform efforts to strengthen teaching and learning, improve academic outcomes for all students, promote meaningful family and community engagement

FACILITATE targeted professional development and technical assistance for Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), community- and faith-based organizations (CBOs/FBOs), private schools, and other state agencies to build capacity in implementing federal programs.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), is the primary federal law supporting K–12 education. It provides funding to improve academic outcomes for disadvantaged students and to support schools in need. Schools must align funded activities with identified needs, engage parents and the community in planning and implementation, and maintain documentation to demonstrate effectiveness. ESEA programs aim to strengthen instruction, raise student achievement, and provide targeted support for students facing academic or social challenges.

Key Federal Programs

1. Title I, Part A – Improving Basic Programs
 - Supports schools with high percentages of low-income students
 - Provides funding for additional instruction, extended learning time, and instructional support
2. Title I, Part C – Migrant Education
 - Ensures educational stability and support for children of migratory agricultural workers
3. Title I, Part D – Neglected or Delinquent Youth
 - Funds programs for students in correctional facilities or alternative settings
4. Title II, Part A – Supporting Effective Instruction
 - Enhances teacher quality and professional development
5. Title III – English Language Acquisition
 - Supports English learners (ELs) in achieving academic and language proficiency
6. Title IV, Part A – Student Support and Academic Enrichment
 - Provides funds to improve school safety, well-rounded education, and technology integration
7. Title IV, Part B – Nia M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)
 - Funds academic enrichment during out-of-school time for students in low-performing schools
8. Title V – Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)
 - Offers additional funding flexibility for small, rural districts

- g. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program
 - Ensures educational access, stability, and support services for homeless children and youth

Mississippi Comprehensive Automated Performance-Based System (MCAPS)

MCAPS is an online application system for the Mississippi Department of Education. It houses the consolidated federal programs application for Titles I, II, III, IV and V, Neglected and Delinquent; ESSER funds; Competitive grants: Homeless Education and 21st Century Community Learning Centers. It also houses the IDEA application and the 1003(a) application. The system contains resource information for LEAs and schools in the MDE Document Library. You can explore MCAPS at mcaps.mdek12.org

OFFICE

Healthy Schools

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WHAT WE DO

PROMOTE student achievement and increase academic performance by improving student health - Health is Academic!

PROVIDE training, technical assistance, and resources to promote school health and compliance with the Healthy Students Act

COLLECT and report critical data to improve school health

PROVIDE guidance to School Nurses on evidence-based practice measures to meet school health needs

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Move to Learn

Better grades. Better health. Studies have shown that physical activity increases children's ability to learn, and as fitness improves, test scores improve. That's why Move to Learn incorporates movement in the classroom through short exercise videos and healthy lesson plans. Visit movetolearnms.org for free resources or to schedule a MTL Live! event at your school.

School Based Administrative Claiming (SBAC)

The SBAC program offers school districts an excellent opportunity to obtain additional funding as reimbursement for staff time spent assisting students and their families learn about Medicaid, Medicaid benefits, and other health care needs of students.

School Nurses

The Office of Healthy Schools (OHS) administers the School Nurse Intervention Grant and offers training for School Nurses.

Menu of Services

The OHS offers PD and technical assistance services in the following areas: Physical Education Curriculum and Instruction, School Nurse training and resources, Framework revisions for Contemporary School Health and Physical Education, HIV/AIDS/STD/Teen Pregnancy Prevention, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and School Health Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Resources.

OFFICE

Intervention Services

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WHAT WE DO

PROVIDE technical assistance and professional development on the implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Early Warning System, Dyslexia Initiatives, Gifted supports and regulations, and English Learner supports

COORDINATE and manage the process for reviewing and awarding the 2024-2025 Dyslexia Scholarships, the 2024-2027 Dyslexia Grant, and the selection process of a State Board of Education approved list of dyslexia screeners, along with academic and behavior interventions

COORDINATE and manage the process for reviewing and awarding the 2024-2025 High Dosage Tutoring Grant

DEVELOP and publish academic and behavioral resource documents to support districts, schools, administrators, teachers, and parents with improving student outcomes (related to MTSS, dyslexia, gifted and English learners)

PROVIDE schools and districts with updated guidance and supports for dyslexia, MTSS (academic and behavior), gifted, and English learners

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Intervention Services provides guidance to districts on the implementation of the essential components of MTSS for effective team-based problem solving that is data-informed, evidence-based, and flexible enough to meet the academic and the behavioral needs of all students. Professional development opportunities are offered to support MTSS implementation. Additional resources can be found by visiting the Intervention Services page at mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices

Dyslexia Awareness Training

Intervention Services provides the required dyslexia awareness training for the state according to MS Code § 37-173-16. This office provides four, one-hour recorded sessions for educators to complete. Visit the dyslexia website for additional information: mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/Dyslexia

MTSS Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Intervention Services provides professional development and technical assistance to districts and schools at no cost. All supports are designed to meet the specific needs of the district or school. To request support, complete the PD request form found on the Intervention Services webpage: mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices

English Learner (EL) Guidance Document

Intervention Services developed an Instructional Strategies and Supports for English Learners Guidance Document to provide teachers information that will assist them with the planning and delivery of effective instruction specifically designed to meet the needs of English Learners (ELs). This document provides teachers and administrators with specific evidence-based strategies to ensure EL students can achieve the same standards of performance we ask of other students. Other available documents include Supports for Parents of English Learners (a guide to help parents understand what it means to be an English Learner) and Adapting Classroom Assessments for English Learners (a resource to assist schools with appropriate adaptations to classroom assessments that assist English Learner students in demonstrating content knowledge). For all EL resources that support effective implementation of EL services visit mdek12.org/EL

English Learner Check-in, Video and Webinar Support

Intervention Services, in cooperation with the Offices of Student Assessment and Federal Programs, has created and posted multiple webinars and videos to support instruction of ELs (English Learner). Recorded supports include various webinars for educators and monthly EL virtual office hours session recordings. The recordings are included along with the PowerPoint slides. All EL supports can be found at mdek12.org/EL

English Learner Professional Development and Technical Assistance Intervention

In cooperation with other MDE offices, we provide professional development and technical assistance to districts and schools at no cost. All support is designed to meet the specific needs of your district or school. To request support, complete the Professional Development Request form found on the English Learner Supports page mdek12.org/EL

Student Dyslexia Scholarships

Students with a dyslexia diagnosis in grades 1-12 are eligible to apply for a scholarship to attend an MDE-approved special purpose, non-public school. These students must have been in a public school the previous year, have a dyslexia diagnosis, and be accepted into a non-public school that meets legislative criteria. Professional development training is available for school districts to receive more information on dyslexia. Dyslexia resources: mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/Dyslexia

Dyslexia Grants

The purpose of the dyslexia grant is to assist school districts in piloting programs needed to meet the needs of general education students identified as having dyslexia or other related reading disorders and need a multisensory, systematic language-based instruction and programming, in accordance with Mississippi Code §37-23-15. The MDE intends that these dyslexia programs support the needs of identified students in accordance with the College- and Career-Readiness Standards, the State Board of Education Goals, and State Board Policy 41.1 on the Intervention Process. The current grant cycle is 2024–2027.

State Board of Education (SBE) Approved List of Dyslexia Screeners

Mississippi Code § 37-173-15 mandates that each local school district screen students for dyslexia in the spring of their Kindergarten year and in the Fall of Grade 1 using a State Board of Education approved screener. Visit mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/Dyslexia to access the list of approved screeners. In addition, districts must submit dyslexia data on students screened in Kindergarten and Grade 1. The Dyslexia data sheet can be found on the Dyslexia homepage above. Each district must provide the Office of Intervention Services with a district point of contact who will upload the required data.

SBE Approved Academic Intervention List

In January 2021, Intervention Services solicited a request for competitive sealed qualifications from qualified vendors for evidence-based academic interventions that would address the academic needs for students in Tier II or Tier III. These academic interventions include a face to face, virtual, or hybrid components, that can help improve students' deficit areas. Access the complete list: mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/Intervention/approved_academic_intervention_list_2021.pdf

SBE Approved Behavior Intervention List

In January 2021, Intervention Services solicited a request for competitive sealed qualifications from qualified vendors for evidence-based behavior interventions that would address the behavioral needs for students in Tier II or Tier III and align with the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning and additional standards approved by the MS State Board of Education. These behavioral and SEL interventions include a face to face, virtual, or hybrid components, that can help improve students' deficit areas. Access the complete list:

mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/Intervention/mississippi_approved_list_of_behavior_interventions_2021_1.pdf

Access for All (AFA) Guide 2.0

Intervention Services, in collaboration with several offices at the MDE, developed the AFA document to provide educators resources and strategies to assist all students. The document offers adaptations that can be used to support all students in academic, physical, speech/language, social emotional, behavioral, and organizational areas. The AFA guide and associated publications: issuu.com/rcumedia/docs/afa_2.0

MTSS Virtual Office Hours

Intervention Services provides a one-hour session where schools and districts can join a virtual call to discuss their questions around MTSS, interventions, dyslexia, gifted, and EL. Additional updates impacting the aforementioned areas is also covered. These meetings occur on the first Wednesday of every month.

Mississippi Early Warning System (EWS)

The MDE developed the (EWS) as a guide to assist school districts and schools in their efforts to help students succeed academically and emerge from Mississippi high schools well prepared for college and careers.

MTSS Attendance Guidance Document

This guidance document outlines the MTSS framework for addressing chronic absenteeism. MTSS provides a structured approach to identifying, intervening, and supporting students at various levels of need, ensuring that every student receives the appropriate assistance to overcome attendance barriers and thrive academically and behaviorally. The framework is structured around three tiers, each with specific interventions and support mechanisms tailored to meet the diverse needs of our student population. [View the document.](#)

High Dosage Tutoring Guidebook

Intervention services, in collaboration with several offices at the MDE and in partnership with Chiefs for Change, developed a High-Dosage Tutoring Guidebook for LEAs. The guidebook aids administrators and teachers as they implement tutoring support for ALL students by providing resources, suggestions, and strategies for effective tutoring practices. LEAs also have access to a tutoring calculator. This calculator serves as a tool to assist in determining the number of tutors needed to effectively serve students that would benefit from a tutoring program. These resources are available on the intervention services page: mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/InterventionServices

Gifted Virtual Office Hours

The Gifted Support Specialist provides a one-hour session during the months of August-May where district gifted contact persons, administrators and gifted teachers can receive updates on the GEP, ask questions, and hear from guest presenters as they discuss strategies and assessments for the identification of potential gifted students.

GEP Professional Growth Rubric

The Office of Intervention Services and Gifted Services, along with the Office of Teaching and Leading, are in the process of developing a professional growth rubric for gifted teachers.

GEP Monitoring Visits

Monitoring visits will continue during the 2024-2025 school year. These visits ensure that districts and schools are following GEP regulations and allows the MDE to provide needed support.

OFFICE

JROTC

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WHAT WE DO

REPRESENT MDE's interests to the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) programs in Mississippi

COORDINATE statewide JROTC competitions and events

SERVE as an information conduit on JROTC matters

ASSIST school districts, JROTC units, and service JROTC headquarters on issues related to the JROTC program

ADMINISTER the Military Star School Program

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

JROTC Purpose

To instill in students of the United States secondary educational institutions the values of citizenship, service to the United States, personal responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment. JROTC is the nation's largest youth training and development program with over 3,400 units and 560,000 students participating. In Mississippi, we have 82 units, 180 instructors, and nearly 11,000

students (cadets). JROTC's focus is on character education and career preparation. It is not a military recruiting program.

JROTC Curriculum

The JROTC curriculum is an accredited academic curriculum that is designed to give students the skills they need to be productive and responsible young adults. JROTC can provide a niche for students of varying interests with regional, state, and national competition in academics, drill, air rifle, orienteering, and athletics. JROTC classroom instruction supplements core curriculum in world history, physical science, civics, finance, political science, aviation, physiology, engineering, and international law in addition to character development and leadership/life skills. In Mississippi, JROTC I can fulfill the PE graduation requirement. JROTC I and II can fulfill the health graduation requirement. JROTC III and IV can fulfill the College and Career Readiness (CCR) graduation requirement.

JROTC Alignment

JROTC is aligned with statewide educational initiatives that are designed to increase the exposure of our cadets to STEM-related career opportunities. Exposure occurs through classroom instruction, field trips to our state's high technology industries, orientation flights with the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, and 38 participations in STEM summer programs at Jackson State University, Mississippi State University, and William Carey University.

JROTC and the National Flight Academy

Many organizations provide funding to allow JROTC cadets to attend the outstanding, 6-day STEM program at the National Flight Academy at Naval Air Station Pensacola, FL each year.

Military Star School Program

The Military Star School Program is designed to help schools respond to the educational and social-emotional challenges "military-connected" children face during their transition to a new school and keep them on track to be college, workforce, and life-ready. "Military-connected" refers to children of service members on active duty, and in the National Guard and Reserves. Public schools are awarded a Military Star designation when the requirements for the program are in place to accommodate "military-connected" children.

OFFICE

Literacy

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WHAT WE DO

SUPPORT and train Kindergarten through Grade 3 teachers, curriculum specialists, and other educators by providing evidence-based literacy strategies aligned to the science of reading

PROVIDE resources and support to families on how to improve students' reading skills at home

DEPLOY K-3 Literacy Coaches (annually) to selected Literacy Support Schools

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Literacy Based Promotion Act (LBPA)

Passed during the 2013 legislative session, the [Literacy-Based Promotion Act](#) (LBPA) places an emphasis on grade-level reading skills, particularly as students' progress through grades K-3. The intent is to increase the proficiency of all students in reading by the end of their 3rd grade year of school. The LBPA places an emphasis on grade-level reading skills, particularly as students progress through grades K-3. Please see the [FAQ](#) for any questions.

Additional resources regarding the K-3 assessments: mdek12.org/OSA/MKAS2

Office Supports

The Division of Literacy provides professional development, Leading in Literacy resources, and [technical support](#) for all Mississippi educators. Visit the links below for more information:

- mdek12.org/Literacy
- mdek12.org/sites/default/files/Offices/MDE/OAE/OEER/Literacy/LBPA/1.13.23_leading_in_literacy_final.pdf

[Strongreadersms.com](#) Website

Families want to help their children become strong readers but may not always know where to start. The Mississippi Department of Education provides the necessary resources, activities, and information, so families can help their children become strong readers and strong leaders. The activities on the website are useful to all students at all levels. Families can move within grade levels to provide their children with the activities that are on their level.

Science of Reading

The MDE Science of Reading webpage refers to the research that reading experts, especially cognitive and linguistic scientists, have conducted on how humans learn to read. This body of knowledge reveals what happens in the brain during reading and what needs to take place instructionally to enable skillful reading: mdek12.org/OAE/OEER/Science-of-Reading

Visit the links below for more information:

- [Mississippi's Statewide Science of Reading Training](#)
- Emerging Science of Reading School Award: [Selection Criteria](#)
- [Structured Literacy Approach](#)
- [High Quality Instruction Materials Professional Development Series](#)

State Literacy Plan

[How to Build Strong Readers: Mississippi's Guide to Developing Literacy Skills from Birth through Grade 12](#) is available online to support parents and students.

Literacy Support Non-Negotiables

[Literacy Support Schools Non-Negotiables](#) resource provides information regarding best practices for a K-3 ELA classroom.

OFFICE

Professional School Counseling & Support Services

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WHAT WE DO

ENSURE equitable academic, social and emotional, college and career development opportunities for all students

APPROVE courses for secondary schools and new course code requests

PROVIDE mental health support and training on suicide and bullying prevention

PROVIDE supports in developing a comprehensive school counseling program

PROVIDE on-site and virtual professional development to PK-12 school counselors and Educator Preparation Providers

DEVELOP and implement curriculum, instructional materials, and programs aligned to the ASCA Student Standards: Mindsets and Behaviors for Student Success

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Professional School Counselors

A professional school counselor is a certified mental health professional supporting all PK-12 students in their social/emotional, academic and career development.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Counselors

They provide guidance and support to students in career and technical education programs. They assist students in exploring career options, developing career plans, and gaining workforce skills. Key responsibilities include helping students select appropriate courses, preparing them for internships and job placements, and building partnerships with local businesses and industries. Additionally, CTE counselors offer academic and personal support, advocate for students, and ensure they have access to necessary resources for achieving their career goals. Their role is crucial in bridging the gap between education and the workforce. For more information visit mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS/CTE-Counselors

Comprehensive School Counseling Program

An integral part of the total educational program that helps every student acquire the skills, knowledge, and attitudes in the areas of academic, career, and social/emotional development that promote academic achievement and meet developmental needs.

Mississippi Professional School Counselor Framework

The School Counselors' framework, developed by the MDE, is aligned with the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) National Model. School counselors have a tremendous responsibility in addressing the social/emotional, academic, and career needs of every Mississippi student in prekindergarten through grade 12 and career and technical education.

Consultation

The collaboration that occurs between school counselors and parents, students, teachers, administrators, and other helping professionals—either within or outside the school setting. The goal is to empower those involved to assist students in the areas of academic, college/career, and social/emotional development.

Crisis Response

The immediate and follow-up intervention necessary to meet urgent needs and prevent situations from becoming more severe.

Direct Services

Are in-person interactions between school counselors and students.

Indirect Services

Services provided on behalf of students, as a result, of the school counselors' interactions with others including referrals for additional assistance, consultation, and collaboration with parents, teachers, other educators and community organizations.

Individual Counseling

Addresses concerns of students that require short-term individual interventions.

Individual Student Planning

Sessions in which school counselors focus on educational planning, including, but not limited to, social skill development, academic planning, course enrollment, graduation planning, and developing individual learning plans.

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

School Counselors are stakeholders in the development and implementation of multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), including, but not limited to, response to intervention and responsive positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Per House Bill 1283, districts will develop and provide in-service training for mental health and suicide prevention. Detailed legislation, proper procedures, guiding resources and approved training curriculum have been provided to districts at mdek12.org/ESE/Mental-Health

Revised School Counselor Professional Growth Rubric

The previous School Counselor Professional Growth Rubric was updated to align with the new Learning Standards for Libraries and consists of 9 standards that support student academic, social/emotional, and college/career in the school. Additional information: mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS

Individual Success Plan (ISP)

Process Standard 14.1.4: The Individual Success Plan (ISP) is a personalized plan for all students in grades 7-12. School districts, using this document as a resource, should select activities to guide students in exploring their strengths and interests, connect strengths and interests to a career pathway, and set career and academic goals based on a chosen pathway.

MS Career Resource Guidance Document

Guidance document for districts in creating a “college-going culture” and preparing students to make postsecondary decisions. This document includes the ISP and other designated activities at grade levels 6-12. This includes an appendix of materials related to academic success. View resources: mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS

MS Career Guidance Standards: K-5 & 6-12

Online guidance documents that include objectives, lessons, and resources for all grades with an emphasis on career exploration and awareness for grades K-5 and educational and career planning for grades 6-12. View resources: mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS

Special Populations (Student Services)

The purpose of instructional services rendered by Special Populations personnel is to enable special population students to experience success in their chosen career and technical education programs. Student Services Coordinators may provide instruction for the disadvantaged career and technical education student in areas including mathematics, reading, and writing in addition to any assistance needed in their career and technical classes. Instruction is coordinated with the career and technical education instructor and services are delivered concurrently with enrollment in a CTE program. More information: mdek12.org/CTE/OCCSS/Student-Services

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Safe & Orderly Schools

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WHAT WE DO

PROVIDE support to schools in the areas of physical security, emergency operations, school discipline, bullying, and school threats

COLLABORATE with the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security to provide training for school resource officers (SROs), school safety administration and staff

PROVIDE support and training to school districts for certifying trained and skilled bus drivers

CONDUCT in-service trainings on policies and laws pertaining to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Act and Entry Level Driver Training for commercial licensees operating a school bus

COORDINATE the Driver Education curriculum for public schools and non-public accredited schools wishing to offer driver education

PROMOTE structurally safe facilities that satisfactorily comply with life safety code and ensure maintenance of a clean and orderly learning environment

ASSISTS districts in developing and implementing comprehensive, preventive maintenance procedures to ensure a healthy and safe environment within the building and on school grounds

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Serving Districts

The Office of Safe and Orderly Schools serves districts in areas relative to School Safety, Pupil Transportation, Facilities, and Driver Education. Throughout the year, the Office of Safe and Orderly Schools conducts safety audits, provides professional development, collaborates with the National School Safety Alliance, the Mississippi School Safety Alliance, the Mississippi Association of School Resource Officers, the Mississippi Association of Pupil Transportation Administrators, the Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, and the Mississippi School Plant Managers Association to review, promote, and enhance practices, regulations, and policies essential to Safe and Orderly Schools.

OFFICE

School & District Transformation

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WHAT WE DO

SERVE as the liaison between the MDE and the districts that are under transformation or consolidation status

PROVIDE direction, guidance, and support in the school/district transformation process while monitoring the implementation process

COLLABORATE frequently with the interim superintendents to implement ongoing evaluation and improvement of instructional programs

WORK collaboratively with other MDE program offices to deploy the necessary supports to schools and districts under transformation

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Program Divisions

This division encompasses the offices of District of Transformation, School Improvement, Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Workforce Development.

Office Goals

In an effort to support schools and districts, the office strives to do the following.

- Create a proactive system of support for school districts to identify deficient areas where the MDE can help a district before becoming a District of Transformation.
- Create teams within the MDE that can work with schools and districts towards improvement.
- Align supports to meet the needs of each individual district and community.
- Embed a workforce development system that is equitable across the state, utilizing post-secondary and industry partners.
- Develop a K12 workforce development plan which can be adapted to local district needs.

OFFICE

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WHAT WE DO

PROVIDE technical assistance and guidance to public school districts in school financial management. This involves assisting school districts and other entities in their budgeting, fiscal and program operations

ADDITIONAL responsibilities include the annual collection and review of financial data from the local school districts. This office also performs some technical review of public school districts' financial information to determine compliance with Accreditation Standards

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Program Oversight

The Office of School Financial Services (OSFS) is responsible for the administration, calculation, and/or distribution of the following programs:

- Chickasaw Cession
- Critical Shortage Home Loans
- Critical Shortage Moving Expense
- Education Enhancement Funds (EEF)
- EEF Buildings and Buses
- EEF Teacher Procurement Cards
- Financial Accounting Manual for Public School Districts
- Mississippi Student Funding Formula (MSFF)

- National Board Certification Reimbursements
- School Business Manager License (SBA)
- School District Indirect Cost Applications and Rates

OFFICE

School Improvement

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WHAT WE DO

PROVIDE oversight and ensure the implementation of federal and state legislation for schools identified for school improvement

PROVIDE guidance and support:

- For systematic improvement of the lowest performing schools and districts in the state of Mississippi
- To Comprehensive Support and Targeted Support and Improvement School, and Schools At-Risk
- Through federal funds for schools to support evidence-based school interventions
- Through professional learning for schools to strengthen capacity of school leaders and school leadership teams

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Office of School Improvement Convening

This convening will provide an environment for networking, collaboration, and professional growth for principals, teachers, interventionists, school improvement facilitators, federal programs directors, and special education directors. Participants will have opportunities to engage in large group and interactive concurrent sessions on instructional and leadership practices. The convening is open to attendees from Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), and Schools at Risk (SAR) schools.

- **When: November 19-21, 2025**
- **Location: Lake Terrace Convention Center – Hattiesburg, MS**

School Board Updates

Monthly updates to the School Board will resume after the release of 2025 School Improvement identifications. A template for School Board Updates will be provided to support this process. Districts will be notified before the updates resume.

FY26 Allocations

Following the release of 2025 accountability results, an updated list of identified schools will be released for 2025 – 2026. FY26 allocations will be awarded to the updated list of schools based on the State Board of Education's approved methodology for awarding 1003 funds.

Community Engagement Councils (CEC)

Following the release of accountability ratings in the Fall of 2025, schools and/or districts meeting the requirements must implement a CEC. During the 2025–2026 school year, districts and schools will have an opportunity to be recognized for their efforts to support community stakeholder engagement with an award of CEC of Promise or CEC of Distinction. Additional CEC information and resources are available on the Office of School Improvement's [webpage](#).

School Improvement Grants Period of Availability

FY23 and FY24

- Obligation Deadline – September 30, 2025
- Liquidation Deadline – December 30, 2025

FY25

- Obligation Deadline – September 30, 2026
- Liquidation Deadline – December 30, 2026

FY26

- Obligation Deadline – September 30, 2027
- Liquidation Deadline – December 30, 2027

Virtual Touchpoints with CSI Schools

Meetings with School Improvement Facilitators of select CSI schools will resume during the 2025-2026 school year.

Virtual Office Hours

Periodic office hours will be conducted to support implementation of school improvement requirements for identified schools. The focus of OSI office hours will align to continuous improvement practices.

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Secondary Education

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WHAT WE DO

OVERSIGHT, design, and management of ongoing secondary initiatives and program

DEVELOP and implement curriculum, instructional materials, and programs aligned to the Mississippi College- and Career- Readiness Standards in core subjects

PROVIDE on-site and virtual professional development and technical assistance to teachers in content areas and STEM related courses

DESIGN and assist in the national promotion, mentorship, and selection of state-level finalists for the PAEMST Award

EVALUATE programs and course offerings for the MOCA process

PROVIDE oversight, promotion, and assistance in the selection of nominations for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

AUDIT secondary school programs, districts, and schools

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Arts Learning Standards for Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts

These standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that students need for success in college and careers and to compete in the global economy. The Arts standards also serve to empower and inspire arts educators and their students to explore the many facets of the arts while preparing them for a lifetime of engagement with art forms. Ensuring a “Well-Rounded Education” means that all students have access to and the opportunity to experience high-quality instruction in the Arts (Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts). For more information on the standards and resources visit mdek12.org/ESE/Arts

Balancing the Equation, Leveling the Playing Field for Mississippi’s Math Instructors

Balancing the Equation is a virtual professional learning community for Mississippi math teachers and is offered through the Office of Secondary Education. These sessions are semi-formal in nature and offer teachers a safe space to discuss issues and concerns around approaches to teaching and learning in math. Each month spotlights a topic, and math educators share resources, knowledge, and skill-building tips with respect to the topic of interest. This is a great opportunity for math educators with any level of experience to become an essential member of the foundation for a stronger Mississippi math network. More information:

mdek12.sharepoint.com/sites/BalancingtheEquationPLCMathTalks

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Course Resources

The CCR curriculum outlines the knowledge secondary students should obtain and the types of skills relevant for a successful transition to postsecondary and the workforce. More information:

mdek12.org/ese/College-and-Career-Readiness

Course Code Catalog

This catalog is designed to assist schools, students, teachers, and parents in selecting the most suitable choices for their students’ educational needs. For more information visit

mdek12.org/ESE/Approved-Courses-for-Elementary-Secondary-Schools-MS

Desmos Calculator Support

The Desmos graphing calculator (MAAP version) is the embedded graphing calculator in the Nextera test delivery platform for End-of-Course (EOC) Algebra I. The Desmos graphing calculator (MAAP version) is also available with the online End-of-Course (EOC) Algebra I practice test. To support Algebra I teachers, the MDE has created a web page compiled of Demos resources. More information: mdek12.org/ese/Desmos-Calculator-Support

Essentials for College Literacy / Mathematics Courses

Based on Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) Policy 608, students who complete one or both courses with an 80 or above will not be required to take the corresponding remedial courses for College Algebra or English Composition I at any of the eight public Mississippi Universities.

High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)

Rubrics for evaluating current instructional resources, textbooks, and materials are available for school and district use at mdek12.org/HQIM

Instructional Planning Guides

Instructional Planning Guides (IPGs) assist teachers in planning rigorous, coherent lessons that focus on critical content at each grade level through an intentional grouping of standards, time considerations, and resources for consideration mdek12.org/ESE/Home

Mathematics Instructional Observation Protocol (MIOP)

The primary purpose of the MIOP is to provide instructional leadership teams at the local level with common, research-based, and content specific criteria when conducting instructional observations. The feedback provided to each mathematics educator, along with coaching and professional learning, are meant to build teacher capacity and improve student achievement while implementing the Mississippi College- and Career-Readiness Standards (MS CCRS) for Mathematics. Visit mdek12.org/sites/default/files/documents/OAE/OAE/final-june_24_2022_math_instructional_observation_protocol.pdf

Math Nation (Algebra Nation)

Through funds appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature, all Mississippi public school districts, will have access to the Algebra Nation platform for another year. Access includes free workbooks for all Algebra I students and 24/7 access to resources for classroom teachers, students, and families aligned to the MS CCRS Algebra I course. Additional resources are being developed to meet the needs of English Language learners and classroom teachers in non-Algebra and pre-Algebra “type” courses. Visit: mathnation.com/ms/

Mississippi Dual Enrollment/Credit and Accelerated Programs

The Mississippi Dual Enrollment and Accelerated Programs Fall 2024 Procedures Manual is located on the MDE Secondary Education Accelerated Programs webpage. Additional information concerning Accelerated Programs, including administrator resources for Advanced Placement courses, are also available at mdek12.org/ESE/Accelerated-Programs

Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter Website

This website offers a centralized location for Mississippi math, English, and social studies teachers to review high-quality, standards-aligned materials that have been evaluated and adopted by other Mississippi teachers and school districts, which sheds light on the selection process at the state level. For more information visit msinstructionalmaterials.org/

Mississippi Mathematics Manipulatives Manual (MMMM)

Teachers across the state of Mississippi, along with content staff at the MDE, and staff at the Center for Math and Science helped to develop nearly 100 featured activities involving the use of manipulatives to help build conceptual understanding in Mathematics. These activities are meant to serve as short, hands-on procedures that may be implemented before, during, or after a lesson. The activities are aligned to the MS CCRS, connected to the MS CCRS Scaffolding Documents, and include step-by-step instructions. They are also adaptable to meet the needs of hybrid, virtual, or in-person instruction formats. These activities are located on the MDE Mathematics web page: mdek12.org/secondaryeducation/mathematics

Mississippi Online Course Approval (MOCA)

Districts desiring to offer online courses must apply for approval through MDE. The application guide and application along with the specific deadline for applying can be found at mdek12.org/ESE/OCA

Mississippi Seal of Biliteracy

This seal recognizes and awards native English-speaking and English Language (EL), students who have attained proficiency in one or more world languages and English by high school graduation. The Seal of Biliteracy demonstrates the attainment of a high level of language proficiency in English and at least one other world language for students. It signals employers and postsecondary institutions of a student's readiness for college and career and for engagement as a global citizen. ***Participation in the Seal of Biliteracy shall be determined by each Local Education Agency (LEA) that must notify the MDE of local policy adoption.*** Recognition for demonstrating a level of biliteracy shall be indicated on the student's final high school transcript. Visit mdek12.org/ese/Mississippi-Seal-of-Biliteracy

Mississippi World Languages Framework and Teaching Guide

The purpose of this guide is to help teachers and administrators understand and effectively implement the Mississippi World Languages Framework. This document is also meant to be a reference for World Language teachers as a comprehensive document which links multiple resources, programs, websites, and research that are important and of interest to World Language teachers. It will be beneficial for the first-year teacher as well as the veteran teacher to use. This document contains research on best practices, the latest trends in the presentation of material, assessment, and the use of technology. Visit mdek12.org/ese/worldlanguages

MPB Classroom TV

In partnership with the MDE, Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB) offers an array of high-quality instructional videos for PreK-12: mpbonline.org/education/classroomresources/classroomtv

Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)

PAEMST recognizes science, technology, engineering, and mathematics teachers who have both a deep content knowledge of the subjects they teach and the ability to motivate and enable students to be successful in those areas. This award, established by Congress in 1983, is the highest honor bestowed by the United States government. PAEMST alternates recognition each year between K-6 teachers and 7-12 teachers. For more information regarding the application process and deadlines, visit paemst.org

Presidential Scholars

The Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 by executive order of the President and is one of the highest honors for high school students. This program recognizes and honors distinguished high school seniors who demonstrate talent in visual, creative, and performing arts as well as in career and technical education. Information on nominating students will be shared with districts in early fall of each year in advance of the November nominating deadline.

Under the Microscope

Under the Microscope is a virtual professional learning community for Mississippi science teachers and is offered through the Office of Secondary Education. These sessions are semi-formal in nature and offer teachers a safe space to discuss issues and concerns around approaches to

teaching and learning in science. Each month spotlights a topic, and science educators share the resources, knowledge, and skill-building tips with respect to the topic of interest. This is a great opportunity for science educators with any level of experience to become an essential member of foundation for a stronger Mississippi science network.

OFFICE

Special Education

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WHAT WE DO

RESPONSIBLE for submitting the Annual State Funding Application to the United States Department of Education (USDE) Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) each Fiscal Year

PROVIDE technical assistance to support schools and districts as they implement state and federal regulations to improve student outcomes for children with disabilities and their families

COMMUNICATE and provide guidance to parents of children with disabilities and local school district personnel in the resolution of disputes through formal dispute resolution processes

DEVELOP and publish instructional and behavioral resources to support and ensure accountability and student achievement in all programs and for all students with disabilities

ESTABLISH and foster a system of school, home, and community resources that provide the physical, emotional, and intellectual support that each student needs to succeed

SUPPORT districts with effective fiscal management practices

PROVIDE support to districts in collecting early childhood data and technical assistance to districts providing services for Pre-K special education students

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Alternate Diploma

This diploma option was first available for incoming ninth graders with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD) beginning in the years 2018-2019 and thereafter. Only students identified by their Individualized Education Program (IEP) Committee as having a significant cognitive disability, as defined by the State Board Policy Chapter 74.19, may be eligible to earn the Alternate Diploma. For more information on the Alternate Diploma, please refer to Appendix A-10: mdek12.org/Accred/AAS

Certificate of Completion

A Certificate of Completion is an acknowledgement of the student's participation in and completion of his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP) and **NOT** a high school diploma or Alternate Diploma. For more information on the Alternate Diploma, please refer to Appendix A-11: mdek12.org/Accred/AAS

Child Find

Child Find is the LEAs ongoing obligation to identify, locate, and evaluate all children suspected of having a disability/disabilities and in need of special education and related services. The Office of Special Education maintains and oversees policies and procedures related to Child Find.

Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CCEIS) (mandatory)

LEAs identified as having significant disproportionality in identification, placement, and/or disciplinary removals must use exactly 15 percent of IDEA Part B funds for CCEIS.

Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) (voluntary)

LEAs can choose to use a portion (up to 15 percent) of their IDEA Part B funds for services to a defined group of at-risk students.

Child Count (December 1)

The Annual Child Count data collected from the December 1 Child Count is used for reports to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to determine funding and MSFF allocations for districts. The data is collected between October 1 and December 1 each year.

Dispute Resolution/Due Process

The OSE maintains a system, policies, procedures, and practices required to implement due process complaint procedures as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Options for resolving disputes include IEP facilitation, mediation, formal state complaints, due

process hearings, resolution meetings, and expedited due process hearings in disciplinary situations.

Early Childhood Programs

Special education services are provided by each school district for children with disabilities, beginning at age 3, through a continuum of placements. Appropriate placement for each child is determined by their IEP committee. Some districts participate in an Early Learning Collaborative. Children with disabilities are included in these programs as specified in each program policy. Other districts participate in the Blended Pre-K Program. This program uses IDEA funds to provide inclusive general education in pre-K classrooms in public schools across the state. Districts also have the option of providing itinerant services to children in inclusive community-based settings such as Head Starts or childcare centers. Self-contained special education classes are provided to children that need more intensive services, as determined by their IEP committee.

Educable Child Program

The OSE provides oversight through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state statute in the placement and funding of students with disabilities in private school/facilities which are state licensed as Intermediate Care Facilities for Intellectual Disabilities (ICFID) and/or Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities (PRTF). The OSE annually accepts applications beginning in July. Reimbursements are provided every 2 months for 5 pay periods.

Educational Interpreter (EI) Program

The OSE utilizes IDEA and state funds to assist districts with funding an educational interpreter to facilitate communication between Deaf or Hard of Hearing students and hearing persons. Services include, but are not limited to, administrators, staff, teachers, service providers, parents, and peers within the educational environment. Applications are posted on the MDE website annually in the fall.

Educational Scholarship Account (ESA)

The Equal Opportunity for Students with Special Needs Act (Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-181-1 through 37-181-21) was signed into law during the 2015 session of the Mississippi Legislature and established Education Scholarship Accounts (ESA). The OSE oversees the Equal Opportunity for Students with Special Needs Act (ESA) which provides an opportunity for parents of children with disabilities who wish to withdraw their child from the public-school system to use state funded scholarship money appropriated to help defray the cost of private school tuition and/or other specific allowable activities to educate their child. Applications are accepted throughout the year, and awards are given on an ongoing basis. Scholarships are awarded on a first come first served basis until funding is exhausted; OSE accepts and disburses quarterly reimbursements annually August-June.

Extended School Year (ESY)

ESY is the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities in accordance with their individualized education program (IEP) beyond the normal school year of the local district and at no cost to the parents of the students. ESY services must be determined on an individual basis by each student's IEP committee based.

Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) Support

The OSE provides funding through IDEA for salary and benefits for Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) support in the Office of Compulsory Attendance Enforcement & Dropout Prevention at the MDE.

MS Comprehensive Automated Performance-Based System (MCAPS)

MCAPS is the online grant funding application system for the MDE which houses the districts IDEA funding applications. The OSE assists districts in budgeting, revisions, and subsequent approvals of their funding applications. For more information visit mcaps.mdek12.org

Monitoring (Programmatic and Fiscal)

The OSE conducts programmatic and fiscal integrated monitoring of district compliance, services, and results through universal, cyclical, targeted, and intensive monitoring processes. The integrated monitoring activities include self-assessment, desk audits, on-site visits, and risk-based assessment of district fiscal components, student records, policies and procedures, etc. Cyclical monitoring begins in the Fall and intensive monitoring is conducted in the Spring based on data collected. Targeted technical support is provided based on individual district needs identified. School districts upload documentation to SharePoint (Programmatic) and MCAPS (Fiscal) within 30 days following the notification of monitoring activities. Based on results, findings are issued, corrected action timelines are indicated, and follow-up with professional development and technical assistance are provided.

New Special Education Director Mentoring Program

The OSE provides direct technical support to all new (0-3 years of experience) special education directors. OSE offers a New Director Boot Camp, monthly virtual office hours, assigned mentors, and on demand technical support.

New Special Education Teacher Mentoring Program

The (OSE) facilitates the New Special Education Teacher Mentoring Program to support and sustain initiatives designed to attract and retain prospective special educators and to increase the longevity of practitioners in the field of teaching special education. Professional learning is provided for mentors, mentees, and leadership.

Orton-Gillingham Based Professional Development

The OSE offers teachers, free of charge, intensive multisensory Orton Gillingham based training courses to support effective classroom instruction for students who struggle with reading. This professional development is currently offered through BrainSpring with Phonics First and Structures training. On average teacher participation yearly is 1,200. Courses are offered face-to-face, online in a self-paced way, or via a live-stream format. Follow-up refresher courses and webinars are also available to teachers who have completed the training.

Performance Determination Reports

The OSE issues the [Special Education Performance Determination Reports](#) annually to inform all stakeholders regarding the extent to which the district is supporting students in special education. The data for this report is based on district results and compliance data compiled annually in the Annual Performance Report of the State Performance Plan under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The State Performance Plan is comprised of 14 items that indicate how well the State is serving students with disabilities. The OSE submits an Annual Performance Report on

these indicators to the U.S. Department of Education. The OSE publishes a synopsis of the performance of each district with respect to the indicators. A target score for each indicator was set by the MDE with input from the Special Education Advisory Panel when the State Performance Plan was written.

Positive Behavior Specialist Program

OSE utilizes IDEA and state funds to offer districts funds to assist them in employing or contracting with a Positive Behavior Specialist to assist with behavior management and positive behavioral interventions in the educational setting. Applications are posted on the MDE OSE website annually in the fall.

Professional Development Coordinator (PDC) Model

The OSE funds ten Professional Development Coordinators (PDCs) to provide training and technical assistance to districts specific to the field of special education through the North Mississippi Education Consortium.

Related Service Support

The OSE provides technical assistance, best practice recommendations, compliance oversight, and other support for districts and professionals related to Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists.

Secondary Transition Services

The OSE oversees transition services for IDEA eligible students ages 14-21. Through monitoring, each district is evaluated regarding compliance and the results of the services provided. The OSE collaborates with multiple state agencies and businesses to aid in positive post-secondary outcomes.

Special Education Connection

Special Education Connection is the premier online resource for information and guidance regarding all aspects of special education published by the LRP Media Group. The MDE OSE provides access to all Mississippi districts to encourage compliance and results in providing services to students with disabilities.

State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)

REACH MS supports the Mississippi State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG). It was first awarded to the Mississippi Department of Education in 2005, and was refunded in 2010, 2016, and 2021. The grant is operated by the University of Southern Mississippi's School of Education. The grant has three areas of focus: Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). This is accomplished through professional learning, training, and ongoing coaching provided at no cost to schools and districts across the state. For more information about PBIS, SEL, and UDL, please contact Selina Merrell, Director, at selina.merrell@usm.edu or 601-325-6958.

State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)

The OSE submits the SSIP comprehensive, multi-year plan to OSEP annually. The SSIP plan focuses on building the capacity of local districts to implement and scale-up evidence-based practices in reading with a focus on improving third and eighth grade reading proficiency. Aligned with other state and federal initiatives, the SSIP was developed so that resources could be

leveraged for maximum impact to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Data is reported to the US Department of Education on February 1 each year.

Section 504

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Under Section 504, FAPE consists of the provision of general or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. Please visit the MDE website for the Section 504 Guidance Document.

OFFICE

Student Assessment

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WHAT WE DO

EVALUATE student performance using the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) in grades 3 through 8 in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, grades 5 and 8 Science, Algebra I, Biology, and English II.

EVALUATE English language proficiency of identified English learners using the ELPA21 Summative Assessment/Alt ELPA21 Summative Assessment in grades K through 12 in the four domains of Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.

ENSURE all Mississippi students are assessed according to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) – including English learners and students with significant cognitive disabilities (SCD)

PROVIDE districts with valid and reliable results to guide instruction through data-driven decisions

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Testing Calendar

The statewide testing calendar may be found at mdek12.org/OSA. Please note that the dates for assessments in 2025-2026 are subject to change. See the list of assessments and vendors below.

Fall 2025

Screeners for elementary students and End-of-Course (EOC) assessments for high school students on 4 x 4 block schedules and/or any re-test student who needs to test to meet one of the graduation options.

- **K-Readiness Screeners** – This is the first of three screeners to provide the “first look” at students. (Vendor: Renaissance Learning, Inc.)
- **Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)** – End-of-Course (EOC) Algebra I, Biology, and English II (Vendor: TBD)
- **Mississippi Academic Assessment Program – Alternate (MAAP-A)** – Alternate Algebra I, Alternate Biology, and Alternate English II (Vendor: TBD)
- **ACT WorkKeys** – This test is offered to districts fall and spring to measure foundational skills required for success in the workplace. (Vendor: ACT Educational Corporation)

Spring 2026

- **ACT** – Available to all juniors for a one-time testing opportunity (Vendor: ACT Education Corporation)
- **English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT)** – This assessment is administered annually to monitor identified English learners' (ELs) progress in acquiring academic English. (Vendor(s): Cambium Assessments and ELPA21)
- **MAAP-A** – Given to students with Significant Cognitive Disability (SCD); Grades 3-8 Math & ELA; Grades 5 & 8 Science; EOC Alternate Algebra I, Alternate Biology, and Alternate English II, (Vendor: TBD)
- **MAAP** – Grades 3* through 8 ELA and Math, Grades 5 & 8 Science, EOC Algebra I, Biology, and English II; (Vendor: TBD)
 - *Students must pass Grade 3 Reading (Session 1), meet a passing score when the reading score is combined with Grade 3 Writing (Session 2), or meet a passing score on one of the two retest opportunities to meet the requirements of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act (LBPA).
- **ACT WorkKeys** – This test is offered to districts in the Fall and Spring to measure foundational skills required for success in the workplace. (Vendor: ACT Educational Corporation)
- **National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)**
This assessment is a congressionally mandated project administered by the National

Center for Education Statistics (NCES). It is given to a representative sample of students across the country. Mississippi will participate in Spring 2026 assessments.

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Technology & Strategic Services (OTSS)

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WHAT WE DO

MSIS TRAINING & SUPPORT: We provide comprehensive training and support to help school districts use the Mississippi Student Information System (MSIS). This includes assistance with data **submission, validation, and certification**. The MSIS Team regularly offers Virtual Office Hours to address questions from district staff.

MSIS RESOURCE LIBRARY: We maintain an ever-growing [Resource Library](#) featuring training videos, how-to guides, and documentation on key MSIS data topics: Annual Reporting Calendar, User Management, MSIS IDs, Discipline, Attendance & Enrollment, Certification, Federal Programs & CTE, Personnel, and Special Education

DATA REPORTING SERVICES to assist school districts with MSIS dashboards and data utilization, ensuring effective communication with district personnel and stakeholders to shape MSIS's future

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE provided for related applications, such as the Mississippi Educator Career Continuum Archive (MECCA) and guidance on cybersecurity.

SHAREPOINT administration that maintains a secure site for district and state document sharing and collaboration.

CYBERSECURITY & DATA PRIVACY framework that provides best practices guidance, threat intelligence, and coordination of state response resources to cyber incidents. We also advise how to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of student data, and, upon request, any cyber security and privacy policies.

E-RATE TRAINING & SUPPORT for school districts filing, responding and processing E-Rate applications submitted to USAC. We also support school districts with E-Rate applications, helping manage internet bandwidth and related issues.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Data Requests

To submit a Public Records Request, visit [MDEK12 Data Request](#). Please include a detailed description of the requested data, specifying the school year and categories such as district, school, gender, and race/ethnicity.

MSIS Training

Districts can request personalized MSIS training by emailing msis2@mdek12.org. For self-service training materials such as manuals, guides, and videos, visit the [MSIS Resource Library](#).

MSIS Feedback

Users can provide feedback directly within the [MSIS application](#). After logging in, click on "Provide Feedback" in the left-hand navigation to suggest improvements.

MDE Applications Support

For assistance with data reporting (including schedules, attendance, grades, and more), email mdeapps@mdek12.org.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For information about the many facets AI has, visit the [Digital Learning – Technology and Strategic Services](#) page.

SharePoint Access

For file sharing and collaboration, MDE program offices provide a secure SharePoint site. For access, email mdenet@mdek12.org. Contact the specific MDE program office for more detailed access and content information.

Security and Privacy Investigations

Report security incidents affecting student data confidentiality through the [Security Investigations Form](#).

Information Security and Data Privacy

Resources on best practices and industry standards for data security can be found at [MDEK12 ISDP](#).

E-Rate Program

This federal program offers discounts for telecommunication services and equipment to schools and libraries. For more information and assistance with the E-Rate application process, please visit the [MDE E-Rate webpage](#).

Technology Advisory Committee (TAC)

Comprising district technology leaders, TAC advises on technology integration and planning. Meetings focus on technology issues and strategies. Interested members can contact Debra Hines at dhines@mdek12.org.

OFFICE

Textbook Adoption & Procurement

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WHAT WE DO

COORDINATE textbook adoption, distribution, care, and use in Mississippi's schools, both public and nonpublic, and the Textbook Inventory Management System (TIMS)

EVALUATE and oversee the state's High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Initiative

MONITOR and provide support for Accreditation Standard 19-Textbook Management

MANAGE the state's Textbook Inventory Management System (TIMS) 2.0

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

High-Quality Instructional Materials

The Office of Instructional Materials and Library Services supplies districts with lists of State Adopted Textbooks in the subject areas of Science, Math, ELA/Reading, Social Studies, Arts, World Language, and CTE. State-adopted textbooks are evaluated by the State Textbook Rating Committee, which includes teachers from various subject areas across the state. The lists of state-adopted textbooks ("HQIM") can be found online on the Mississippi Instructional Materials Matter website: msinstructionalmaterials.org.

Logistics of Local Adoption

The Office of Instructional Materials and Library Services will train school districts on developing local adoption protocols in Fall 2025.

8 Elements of Effective Implementation

The Office of Instructional Materials and Library Services will train school districts regarding best practices for implementing new curriculum in Spring 2026.