

# Mississippi Department of Education Proposal for W.K. Kellogg Foundation

The Mississippi Department of Education requests support from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to reverse the trend of high dropout rates and low academic achievement of Mississippi's public school students. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation can play a crucial role in the development and sustainability of a set of connected strategies to achieve our vision

- To reduce the dropout rate by 50 percent in five years.
- To reach the national average on NAEP assessments in seven years.
- To create a set of policies that ensure accountability for student achievement
- To sustain quality opportunities for civic engagement by all education stakeholders so that in Mississippi, public education engages "the public"

The Mississippi Department of Education seeks to collaborate with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation because it:

- Shares the vision of what education can provide for students, both today and well beyond the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
- Has the resources necessary to implement the plan; and
- Operates beyond the political constraints that have hampered educational progress in the United States for decades.

The major strategy to achieve this bold mission is to establish and sustain a Center for Education Innovation focused on increasing teacher quality and quantity, increasing school leader quality and quantity, providing a rigorous high quality curriculum and assessment program that accelerates student learning, building and enhancing a positive public perception of public education in Mississippi and sustain an education system that prepares students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Mississippi.

## CHALLENGES DEFINED

Mississippi is a study in contrasts. While some areas of the state are very progressive, both sociologically and economically, other areas remain tied to the past and have been unable to create the changes necessary to move beyond the status quo to a more enlightened and prosperous future.

Much of the education landscape in Mississippi was shaped decades ago during the Civil Rights movement. Statewide, approximately 90 percent of K-12 students attend public schools. Areas that stood in strong support of public education and united to provide an excellent education for all students during desegregation have continued to have thriving public schools. Other areas, such as the Delta and Jackson, which experienced a tremendous loss of white students in a short period of time when the schools were desegregated, continue to struggle with a lack of community support. In these areas, the schools are segregated between public and private schools, with only a small number of white students in the student population at the public schools.

### Poverty

However, even with pockets of prosperity, Mississippi's poverty rate is still very high. In 2004, 22 percent of people were in poverty, compared to 12.4 percent nationally, making Mississippi the poorest state in the country. Thirty-one percent of related children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 15 percent of people 65 years old and over. Eighteen percent of all families and 44 percent of families with a female householder and no husband present had incomes below the poverty level.

The median household income is \$31,642, compared to \$44,684 nationally. The per capita income is \$17,922, compared to \$24,020 nationally.

Mississippi continues to be undereducated when compared to the rest of the nation. Of the population 25 years and over, 77.3 percent have a high school diploma, compared to 83.9 percent nationally. Only 18.9 percent of Mississippians have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 27 percent nationally. (2004 Census)

Race continues to play a significant role, with Mississippi's population primarily divided between two ethnicities: white, 61.0 percent; and black or African American, 37.2 percent. Although there has been a significant increase in the representation of African Americans among elected officials, business owners and other professionals, there remains a disparity in income levels. The median household income is \$23,313 and the per capita income is \$10,042 for African Americans in Mississippi. (2000 Census)

Of all areas of Mississippi, the Delta has the greatest disparity between a small number who are very prosperous and a large number who have very little, often skirting the poverty line. This goes back to the land. Those who have land are the ones who have wealth and power. They depend on farm labor for their businesses to succeed and their children and grandchildren attend private schools, so they have little interest in investing in public education.

Traditionally a heavily Democratic state, Mississippi has undergone a Republican transformation over the past two decades. A strong Republican occupies the Governor's Office and the Lieutenant Governor, the State Treasurer and State Auditor are also Republicans.

The House of Representatives is controlled by Democrats and is led by a Speaker that has been a strong supporter of education throughout his many years of service. There is a group of African Americans in the Legislature, known as the Black Legislative Caucus that stands united on many issues. In 2001, the Lieutenant Governor was instrumental in development and passage of legislation establishing a five-year, 30 percent pay increase for Mississippi teachers.

### Low Student Achievement

Many children throughout Mississippi face numerous challenges in their lives, including an unstable family situation and moving frequently, so that neither their living situation nor their school situation is settled. Considering this, it is certainly not surprising that Mississippi students do not score well on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams. However, while Mississippi falls near the bottom in straight achievement on NAEP tests, we have made

significant improvement in grades 4 and 8 mathematics over a 13-year period. Mississippi has made improvement in grade 4 reading and grade 8 reading has held steady.

- In both grade 4 and grade 8 math, the gains from 1992 to 2005 outpaced the nation. In grade 4, Mississippi gained 25 points, which was the third largest gain among participating states over that period. In grade 8, Mississippi gained 16 points, which was the sixth largest gain among participating states.
- The proportion of Mississippi public school 4<sup>th</sup> graders who scored in the highest two levels in reading in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) increased by 29% between 1992 and 2005. (National Center for Education Statistics. *Nation's Report Card: Reading 2005*. October 2005)
- The proportion of Mississippi public school 4th graders who scored at the highest two levels in mathematics in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has more than tripled between 1992 and 2005. (National Center for Education Statistics, *Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2005*. October 2005)
- The proportion of Mississippi public school 8th graders who scored at the highest two levels in mathematics in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has more than doubled between 1992 and 2005. (National Center for Education Statistics, *Nation's Report Card: Mathematics 2005*. October 2005)
- The proportion of Mississippi public school 8th graders who scored at the highest two levels in writing in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) increased by 18% between 1998 and 2002. (National Center for Education Statistics, *Nation's Report Card: Writing 2002*. July 2003)

Mississippi schools have demonstrated progress in meeting the guidelines of both the Mississippi Accountability System and the *No Child Left Behind Act*.

- In 2004-05, over 90% of our schools are rated successful and above under the Mississippi Accountability System, with over 50% classified as *Exemplary* or *Superior-Performing*.
- In 2004-05, 89% of our schools met Adequate Yearly Progress requirements in all three areas under No Child Left Behind guidelines. We have been making incremental progress in bringing student achievement up and greater progress in closing the achievement gap.

A mechanism for helping Mississippi's lowest performing schools is built into the Mississippi Accountability System. The five levels that Mississippi schools may be classified are:

- Level 5 – *Superior-Performing*
- Level 4 – *Exemplary*
- Level 3 – *Successful*
- Level 2 – *Under-Performing*
- Level 1 – *Low-Performing*

If there are more than 10 Level 1 schools, then the 10 schools with the lowest test scores are named Priority Schools. If there are less than 10 Level 1 schools, then they are all named Priority Schools. The legislation provides that, once a school has been identified as a Priority School, an evaluation team, consisting of seven trained members, conducts data analysis as well as an on-site visit.

Evaluation team members are trained to assess the school in the following categories:

- School accreditation legal requirements
- Data analysis
- Curriculum alignment
- Effective curriculum and instructional strategies
- The State Department of Education school improvement plan process
- Personnel appraisal
- Effective community involvement
- Public relations
- Safe and orderly school climate
- Policy development and implementation
- Effective school resource allocation
- Effective school management

The evaluation report is presented to the principal, superintendent and local school board. Following this presentation, the report is presented to the community at an advertised public meeting.

The Department then works with the local school district to develop a school improvement plan. A local parents and citizens advisory council is also established to provide input and guidance into the development of the plan and its evaluation during the implementation period. Local parent-teacher associations and other community-based organizations help select members of the council. In addition to extensive technical assistance given throughout the year, the Priority Schools also receive grants to assist in the implementation of the school improvement plan. A progress report is issued monthly to the local school board and the local parents and citizens advisory council.

As part of the school improvement plan, a professional development plan for school administrators, teachers or other employees who are identified during the evaluation process as needing improvement is also developed. Participation in the professional development plan is a condition of employment. If the evaluation report reveals a school district central office problem, the superintendent of the school district is also required to participate in a professional development plan.

There are sanctions defined in the law for schools that do not show improvement or districts that have more than half of their schools designated as Priority Schools.

This formula for school improvement works. In 2003, there were 31 schools that were designated Level 1, Low-Performing, with the 10 lowest performing schools named Priority Schools. In

2004 and 2005 there were only eight schools in the state that were designated as Level 1. In 2006, there are only three schools rated as Level 1 schools.

### Dropouts

Based on tracking a cohort group of students who were in the ninth grade in 2001-02, Mississippi's estimated dropout rate in four years is 29.4%. Only 59.0% are graduates and 64.7% are completers.

Legislation passed in the last session established the Office of Dropout Prevention in the Department of Education. The office will establish graduation rate benchmarks for each two-year period from the 2008-2009 school year through the 2018-2019 school year, which will serve as guidelines for increasing the graduation rate for cohort classes to 85 percent by the 2018-2019 school year.

A Dropout Prevention Advisory Committee recently held its first meeting at the Department of Education. It will serve as the steering committee for the larger Dropout Prevention Task Force.

### Lack of Adequate Resources

Mississippi schools continue to battle a lack of adequate resources. Passed in 1997, the Mississippi Adequate Education Program was designed to provide all school districts adequate and equitable resources to be successful, but has only been fully funded once. Using an average of the actual operating costs of Level 3 or "Successful" schools, the formula determines a base student cost and how much should be contributed by the local community and how much should be contributed by the state. Despite its design to level the playing field between the school districts in economically depressed areas and those in relatively wealthy areas. When the formula is not fully funded, the equity portion of the formula is lost. However, the formula is based on the amount schools in Mississippi actually spend, which has been far below what was needed for decades.

Lack of proper funding is also a barrier to our pre-school programs. We know that learning begins from day one, but there is no state revenue available for pre-school programs. Many children do not enter kindergarten ready to learn. Through the use of programs supported by private companies and foundations, such as the Chevron *Excel by 5* program, some school districts have been able to focus on pre-school programs and have made a difference for these children. We must utilize programs such as these as a model force multiplier to create momentum to build the programs and attract additional funding.

### Teacher Shortage

Mississippi faces a chronic shortage of teachers. In the 2004-05 school year, 5,820 teachers were eligible to retire. In addition, 114 superintendents and 61 assistant superintendents were eligible to retire. In fact, we have significant numbers eligible to retire in several areas, as the following chart shows:

<b>Position</b>	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Number Eligible to Retire</b>	<b>% of Current Employees Eligible to retire</b>
Teachers	32,027	5,820	18.2%
Superintendents	148	114	77.2%
Assistant Superintendents	85	61	71.9%
Principals/Assistant Principals	1,484	502	33.8%
Supervisors	525	202	38.4%
Guidance Psychologists/Psychometrists	1,124	305	27.2%
Librarians and Media Specialists	763	259	34.0%

Of course, we have students graduating from teacher education programs to fill these positions. The question is: Are there enough? Do we have enough young people choosing to major in education? Do we have enough graduates leaving college and entering the K-12 classroom? And, are we keeping them there?

During the 2003-04 school year, the teacher preparation programs at the eight public universities and seven private colleges admitted 1,608 students. Mississippi-approved teacher education programs graduated 1,572 candidates. Of those graduates, 70 percent (1,112) were licensed and employed in Mississippi as first-year teachers within a year after the close of the academic term in which they graduated.

In Mississippi we lose approximately 50 percent of new teachers within the first five years of teaching, which is on par with national statistics.

## VISION FOR K-12 EDUCATION IN MISSISSIPPI

**We must set measurable goals and build the right solution for Mississippi to reach those goals. Our goals are:**

- To reduce the dropout rate by 50 percent in five years.
- To reach the national average on NAEP assessments in seven years.
- To create a set of policies that ensure accountability for student achievement
- To sustain quality opportunities for civic engagement by all education stakeholders so that in Mississippi, public education engages “the public”

Mississippi is the poorest state in the country, which means we have the most challenges. Yet, we spend the least. A fundamental shift in attitude toward public education must occur in Mississippi, particularly in the Delta, for the goals to be reached. The Mississippi Department of Education must develop a roadmap to improve education and reach these goals. While many models for school improvement exist, we must develop a Mississippi solution that addresses the history, culture and challenges that are unique to our state.

In order for the Mississippi Department of Education to develop this roadmap and lead our schools in reaching our goals, we must have an excellent staff. However, due in part to underfunding, we have suffered a loss of 117 positions and depletion of talent, as many of our most effective staff members have been pulled to local school districts and education

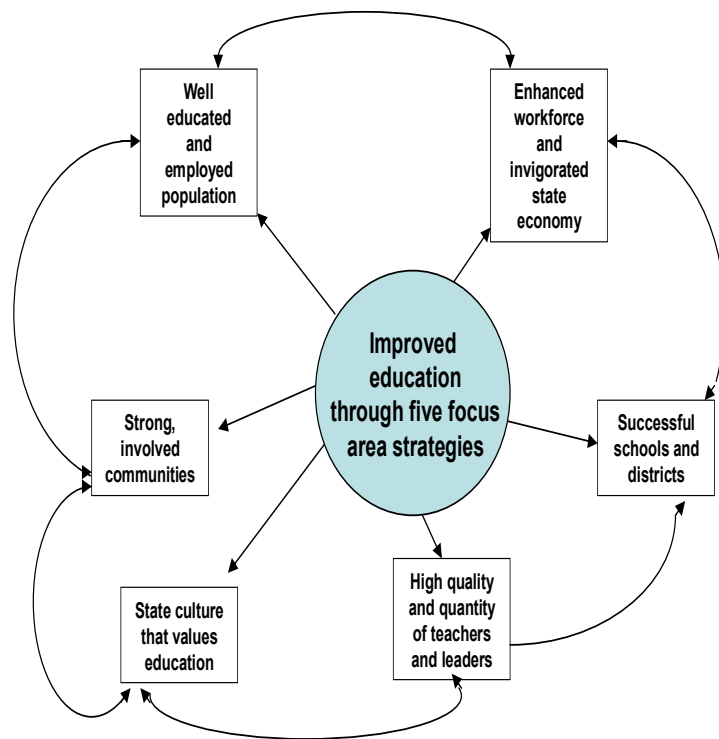
improvement consulting firms because of higher salaries. At this point, we do not have the human capital necessary to help our districts improve.

### Theory of Change

A theory of change identifies the critical levers necessary to advance a comprehensive framework for improvement – specifically demonstrating the scope, sequence and intensity of the interventions. Below is a graphic demonstration of the Mississippi Department of Education’s theory of change based on the challenges, successful strategies and vision to decrease the dropout rate, increase learning, sustain an accountability policy agenda and engage the public in Mississippi.

## MS Education Plan Theory of causality and change

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Increase curriculum rigor; improve teacher quality and quantity; improve leader quality and quantity; create state value for education; design education system for 21st Century Workforce

## FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVEMENT

### Key Focus Areas for Improvement

The mission of schools and educators must be to accelerate learning and keep students and staff safe.

As identified in the theory of change we have determined which variables impact accelerating student achievement and therefore saving the lives of children. On the school level, you break the school day down minute-by-minute and determine what the controllable variables are. Then, you put the appropriate controls in place to capture every minute of learning time and seize every opportunity to ensure that students are successful and safe. This approach has proven to be successful at both the school and district level. Obviously, this success can be achieved at the state level, with the appropriate sets of policies and public engagement.

The statewide variables that are controllable are:

- Providing a rigorous high quality curriculum and assessment program that accelerates student learning;
- Ensuring that we recruit and retain quality teachers in every classroom;
- Ensuring that we recruit and retain quality administrators in every school and district;
- Building and enhancing a positive perception of public education in Mississippi;
- Design an educational system that prepares students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce in Mississippi.

Addressing each of these issues is crucial if we are to move student achievement from where it is to where we want it to be.

### Curriculum and Assessment Program

A rigorous curriculum program must be supported by lesson plans, instruction and assessments that are high-level. The level of rigor in the classroom is directly correlated to the expectations of the teacher. We must have and display high expectations for all students. We have rewritten the language and math curriculum frameworks to infuse more rigor and we are revising the assessments to reflect the increased rigor.

### Quantity and Quality of Teachers

We must have an outstanding teacher in every classroom. Studies have shown that, if students have an above-average teacher for five years in a row, the achievement gap closes. Research also reveals that students learn six times more in classrooms with above-average teachers. Now imagine the possible impact of having an outstanding teacher in every classroom from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

We have a number of incentive programs to recruit and retain the best teachers for the classrooms of today and tomorrow:

- The Critical Needs Teacher Scholarship Program (CNTSP), offering tuition and other incentives to those who become licensed and teach in Mississippi Critical Shortage Areas as designated by the Mississippi Board of Education..



- The William Winter Teacher Scholar Loan Program offers assistance to undergraduate education students who agree to teach in a Mississippi school district for a specified number of years in return for the scholarship dollars. In 2004-05, 760 recipients received \$2.5 million as part of this program.
- The Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program provides funds to pursue a Master of Education or an Educational Specialist degree to qualified teachers in Critical Shortage Areas.
- The Mississippi Employer-Assisted Housing Teacher Program is a special home loan program that is available to licensed teachers who render service in Critical Shortage Areas.
- Reimbursement of moving expenses is a one-time reimbursement of moving expenses for teachers who teach in geographic critical shortage areas. For these two programs, 99 awards, totaling almost \$200,000 were made to help teachers relocate and settle in a new area, hopefully becoming invested in the area and committed to staying there.
- The Mississippi Troops-to-Teachers actively recruits and assists transitioning servicemen and women to become teachers. Last year, 30 teachers were placed through this program.
- There are also alternate routes for an individual who holds a bachelor's degree that is not in education to become a teacher and translate his or her real-world experience into valuable information for the students in the classroom today.
- The Career Fair for Educators is an annual teacher recruitment event where prospective teachers meet district personnel to fill vacancies in Mississippi school districts.
- The policies that sustain these programs and opportunities will be assessed and enhanced to ensure Mississippi schools are equipped with the quantity and quality of teachers to achieve its vision

#### Quantity and Quality of Administrators

Of course, having an outstanding teacher in every classroom doesn't just happen. It takes outstanding leadership from the principal, superintendent and Board to ensure that this happens. The truly exceptional schools are led by exceptional principals who understand teaching and learning and know how to help teachers improve.

The Mississippi School Administrator Sabbatical Program enables local school districts to grant sabbatical leave to licensed teachers employed in Mississippi schools for not less than three years. The purpose is to allow such teachers to participate full-time in an educational leadership program and become local school district administrators. Five districts participated in this program in 2004-05, with 12 sabbaticals awarded and over \$400,000 expended.

There is also an alternate route for administrators to become certified. The Department's Office of Quality Educators collaborates with the Mississippi Community College Foundation to offer

the Mississippi Alternate Path to Quality School Leadership Program (MAPQSL). This program is designed for individuals to become certified through one of two tracks, the Educator Track and the Business Track.

Hurricane Katrina brought unprecedented challenges to Mississippi's schools, but our teachers and administrators have demonstrated remarkable courage and ingenuity in solving the many problems they faced and continue to face. The road to recovery will be long and arduous, but Mississippi's schools have already demonstrated that they are committed to doing what is necessary to meet the needs of children.

We will ensure that the local community members are aware of these quality opportunities and encourage their participation to motivate potential leaders to consider school administrator positions and create policies to support administrator recruitment, selection and professional development.

#### Culture of Education in Mississippi

Schools must also have support from the community and local businesses if they are going to be exceptional. Schools do not exist in a vacuum and cannot do all that must be done alone. Strong communities and strong schools must work together for the betterment of both.

Unfortunately, a large segment of Mississippi's population does not value education or view it as the road to a better life. The Institutions of Higher Learning in Mississippi recently commissioned a study conducted by the Institute for Higher Education Policy to present information "to help policymakers and the general public understand and appreciate the relative contribution of education to individuals and to society."

The study, "Mississippi's Mandate: Why the Investment in Education Pays off in Mississippi," acknowledged that:

"In states such as Mississippi, where the level of educational attainment is relatively low, academic aspirations and the value ascribed to education will also be relatively low. Part of the challenge facing legislators and policymakers in Mississippi is to break down cultural barriers to education by changing deeply entrenched beliefs and perceptions."

Schools must hold students and parents accountable. At the same time, communities must hold schools accountable. Students must be engaged in meaningful activities so they don't have the time or opportunity to become engaged in negative or distracting activities. Parents must be informed about the progress the student is or is not making and enlisted to ensure that the student is achieving their full potential.

Community members and organizations should be vital members of the school community and thus invited to join teachers and students in community-based activities and pedagogies that advance both student achievement and community improvement. Students at young ages can contribute to their community, given the opportunity and high expectations, and acquire the

knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary for their role as active principled citizens. We cannot wait until students graduate from high schools to expect them to contribute to their communities, rather they should be authentically engaged in community-based activities throughout their P-12 school experience. Accordingly the community becomes a co-educator and advocate for public education rather than a spectator in P-12 education.

These deeply held beliefs manifest themselves in numerous ways. Attending school, completing homework after school and having additional reading materials in the home are not viewed as important tasks by many parents and this attitude translates to children. A child who does not attend school regularly, does not complete homework assignments and does not have the opportunity for additional reading outside of school cannot be expected to do well in school.

One method that can be used to combat this belief system is a branding campaign that utilizes Mississippi Star Power to send the message that education is important and should be placed as the top priority for each child and family in our state. Native Mississippians have been successful in many different realms, including writing, music, athletics, acting, business, and broadcasting. These individuals are easily recognized and respected by most Mississippians. By having them deliver the message, it would encourage more people to listen to the message and also add credibility to the message. The goals for the campaign are to reduce the dropout rate and increase public support of K-12 education.

#### Redesign of Education System

While all other facets of our lives change with incredible speed, our schools and the way they are structured has become almost stagnant. Studies have shown that one of the reasons students choose to drop out is that they fail to understand how they will use what they are learning in the classroom today in a job they will have tomorrow. Helping students to understand the connection between the classroom and the real world is not easy and the same approach will not work for every student.

Our high schools must integrate workforce development and technology skills in all secondary vocational courses during each curriculum revision process and a certified Rigor and Relevance teacher will serve on each writing team to enhance teaching strategies to include real-world applications. Each curriculum should include active learning techniques, co-operative learning, project-based learning and assessment strategies. Rigorous expectations and relevant teaching strategies should also be included.

Utilizing career pathways will also help students begin gaining specific skills necessary to work in numerous occupations sharing a common theme. This broad theme gives students a context for connecting what they are learning across a wide spectrum of academic subject areas.

Designed to expand options and opportunities for all students, participating in a career pathway can be that spark that truly motivates a student to work hard to complete school. By helping them to understand better what career options are available as well as their own interests and abilities, the pathways help students develop goals and make career plans.

The seven pathways include:

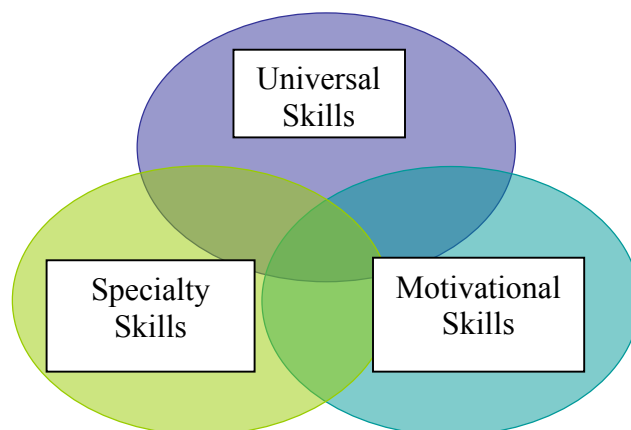
- Health Care
- Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Food Preparation and Service
- Construction and Manufacturing
- Transportation
- Business Management and Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math
- Human Services

We arrived at these seven pathways by looking at where the job market growth is and will be. We looked at which industries will have the job opportunities for today’s students. Then we looked at how to prepare these students to enter these jobs. Some will enter their careers by obtaining a four-year degree; some will enter their careers by going to a community college; others will enter the workforce directly from high school. We looked at how to prepare students for each of these three entry levels. Helping students to envision their future and prepare them for it are essential ingredients for keeping them engaged and in school.

In addition, we are committed to ensuring that graduates are knowledgeable and skilled as contributors to their community, so that regardless of their vocation or pathway they are active principled citizens who vote, address social issues, contribute to their community and motivated to assist those in need. That is, equipped with the knowledge, skills and dispositions of good citizenship. It is impossible to achieve this goal, without the engagement of local community members who support public education and serve as models of civic responsibility.

#### Changes Necessary for Improvement

The Mississippi Department of Education is creating a framework that will transform Mississippi’s educational system and promote the integration of 1) Universal skill development, 2) Specialty skill development, and 3) Motivational skill development for all of Mississippi’s children. A possible visual depiction includes:



#### Pressures/Influencers to Improve Current Education Practices

To set the stage so that all Mississippians know that a new day is dawning for education in Mississippi, a branding campaign utilizing the tagline, “Mississippi Rising,” will be launched.

This will send a message to everyone, both within the education system and beyond it, that Mississippi is moving forward and will no longer accept being on or near the bottom on national measurements. With famous Mississippians as the faces of the campaign, it will help encourage students to begin reaching for the stars by excelling in school today. The goals of the campaign are to reduce the dropout rate and increase public support for K-12 education. Greater community support and expectations will contribute to the improvement of schools.

Organizers recognize that there will need to be concerted efforts to pressure and persuade school districts throughout Mississippi to improve their education practices. To accomplish this, the State Department of Education will utilize a multi-disciplinary approach. Proposed strategies include:

- **Mobilize grass root efforts** – Mississippi has a rich and storied history of grass root mobilization. The Department will build on these existing networks to increase the community’s understanding of what they can do to improve education for all children.
- **Connect effective school reform efforts to less effective efforts** – The Department recognizes that highlighting and sharing effective school reform practices is a powerful way to model the change it wants.
- **Leverage state and foundation monies** – The Department will continue to raise funds from various government, corporate and philanthropic sources. In many instances, this will include leveraging state and foundation monies, continuing to raise money for hurricane relief, and requesting increased investment from various legislative bodies to support the school reform efforts.

**Partner with existing revitalization efforts in the state** – The Department will partner with existing revitalization efforts like the Delta Revitalization Task Force to leverage existing and ongoing efforts to transform schools, encourage economic development; and support the regional economy.

**Partner with business community**—The Mississippi Economic Council (MEC), the voice of business since 1949, and its affiliate organization, the Public Education Forum (PEF) of Mississippi, have planned and invited the State Superintendent to participate in the Trailblazer Tour. The tour will consist of 25 forums in communities around the State to help business leaders build a stronger partnership with school officials and connect to a common statewide agenda. MEC and PEF cooperate in the Mississippi Scholars Program.

- **Broaden leadership skills** – One of the central strategies to transform the state’s education system is to recruit and retain a thousand new teachers. The Department proposes to partner with Teach for America to secure new teachers as soon as possible. Efforts will be organized to train and retain these new teachers over the long term.
- **Improve University Teacher/Administrator Preparation** – Develop policies that require university prep programs to improve effective teacher and administrator quality.

- **Develop a branding campaign**—The Department will launch a branding campaign to influence students to stay in school and the community to support schools and students. (SEE D)
- **Utilize conservatorship option** – where necessary the Department will assume leadership of those schools districts that suffer from chronic underachievement and underperforming leadership.

Reframe Mississippi’s Existing Education Curricula as Workforce Development.

The Department will work to ensure that the current education curricula is more future oriented. Going forward, the education curricula will focus more on growth industries, and workforce and economic development for the state and region. Future areas of focus might include technology, sustainable energy, and regional economic strategies. (See Legislative Budget in Attachment A)

This provides an excellent opportunity to engage our students, of all ages through courses and programs. in creating solutions that address environmental, economic and social problems in Mississippi as well as maximizing the contributions of community members. The benefits, short term, demonstrate the importance of education to students and long term creates a well-prepared workforce for current and future jobs in Mississippi.

Develop communication strategies and products that build on “Mississippi Star Power” as a tagline.

The goals of this branding campaign is to reduce the dropout rate and increase public support of K-12 education, as well as articulate the role of policies to sustain quality education and community engagement in support of Mississippi public education.

Increase the capacity of the Mississippi Department of Education

The Department will work to increase its capacity to develop the leadership skills of critical personnel; fundraise; implement governance structures; develop communications strategies and tools; Manage teams for curricula development, teacher and administrator development; and community development/mobilization. The Department will also meet with Kathy Smith of the New School Venture Fund for her expertise on these and related issues.

The Department used a portion of the federal hurricane recovery funds to contract with a service provider to create curriculum guides in Language Arts, Reading, and Mathematics for those districts that lost their materials during Hurricane Katrina. Available to all Mississippi teachers, but not mandated, the guides will be aligned to the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks for language arts and mathematics and are grounded in recent, scientifically-based research on teaching and learning. The overarching goal is a responsive curriculum that will facilitate teachers in helping each student to reach his or her maximum potential.

The Department will establish a separate 501c3 – outside of the Legislature, School Board and current bureaucracy to lead and coordinate efforts to transform Mississippi’s education systems. This entity will focus on Innovation and Partnerships. The planning committee suggested that a review of the Innovation Center for Oakland, California Public Schools be conducted as a

possible model. The State Superintendent of Education will serve as the general contractor of the Innovation and Partnership Center.

These strategies will be supported by a set of policies to ensure they are sustained and supported long-term.

Develop the Mississippi Partners for Education Network.

The State Superintendent will subcontract with various entities to ensure progress in each of the following priority areas is achieved:

- Teacher quality and quantity
- Administrator quality and quantity
- Curricula design and assessment
- School Structure and Culture
- Community Engagement
- Fundraising

The resulting network of organizations will augment the Mississippi Department of Education's capacity to affect and sustain the changes necessary to ensure the vision of public education in Mississippi is sustained. This network also ensures that the critical focused work in Mississippi is disseminated to stakeholders, policymakers and organizations within the United States, demonstrating *how* to successfully transform public education.

Current and potential members of the **Mississippi Partners of Education Network** include:

<b>National</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Family</b>
MS State University Delta State University Ole Miss Kellogg Broad Gates Teachers unions Advocacy Groups Local Schools Community Based Organizations National Governors Association Education Commission of the States	MS Manufacturers Assoc. MS School Board Assoc. MS Economic Council MS State Univ. Delta State Univ. Ole Miss Comm. College Network Head Start network CISCO Systems Chevron Bell South Northrop Grumman Teachers unions Various private sector providers (i.e. America's Choice) Government (Black Caucus, Education Committee, Feds Advocacy Groups, Local Schools, Community Based organizations Education Commission on the States	Methodists Councils MS State University Delta State University Ole Miss Foundation of the Mid South Head Start network Teachers unions Advocacy Groups, Local Schools, Community Based organizations Social clubs National Council on Education	Regional Education Conservancies MS Assoc of School Supts. MS State Univ. Delta State Univ. Ole Miss CISCO Systems Chevron Bell South Teachers unions Advocacy Groups, Local Schools, Community Based organizations Education Commission on the States National Council on Education	MS State University Delta State University Ole Miss Teachers unions Advocacy Groups, Local Schools, Community Based organizations	Ms State Univ. Delta State Univ. Ole Miss Wal-Mart Barksdales Foundation of the Mid South Teachers unions Advocacy Groups, Local Schools, Community Based organizations

### Partners in Improvement Effort

Mississippi's educational system is fortunate to have several partners in its quest to improve education.

#### Cisco

Cisco Systems, Inc. recently announced a \$40 million commitment in a multi-phase, three year education initiative in the Gulf Coast region to aid in post Hurricane Katrina rebuilding activities. The 21S initiative is a blueprint for reconstructing and improving schools that will begin in Mississippi and can be replicated around the country.

#### BellSouth

Following Hurricane Katrina, BellSouth donated \$2.5 million earmarked to provide virtual courses to affected students, train teachers in online course delivery and provide support for schools and learning centers to accommodate student needs.

#### Barksdale Reading Institute

Jim Barksdale, former President and Chief Executive Officer at Netscape Communications Corporation, and his late wife, Sally, established the Barksdale Reading Institute in 2000. The impetus behind the institute began when Barksdale and several of his Internet compatriots formed the Technology Network, an organization designed to pool resources to help technology-oriented companies identify and retain the best talent.



### National Governors Association

Mississippi was one of only eight states selected to receive grants of up to \$50,000 to help them develop literacy plans and policies to improve adolescent literacy achievement from The National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices. Administered by the NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center), the *Reading to Achieve* grant program will assist states in the development or implementation of plans to strengthen policies that promote adolescent literacy. After a thorough evaluation process, a selection committee independent of NGA selected grantees that presented coherent plans for developing a K-12 literacy plan or establishing a state literacy plan for grades four through 12 that aligns with the existing early literacy plan and achieving measurable adolescent literacy reform.

### Gates Foundation

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have invested \$5 million in Mississippi to accelerate education improvements in school districts that are serving more than 10,000 students displaced by Hurricane Katrina. The investment targets 50 of the state's highest need schools which are serving a high percentage of displaced students.

The year-long investment will help the state tackle the combined challenge of serving a large number of recently displaced students now being educated in Mississippi school districts, as well as improving academic rigor and instruction in the aftermath of the hurricane. The investment will support educators with coaching and other professional development and provide instructional resources to improve student achievement in the classroom.

### Chevron

Chevron recently announced the launch of Energy for Learning, an \$18 million program to support public school education in 23 Louisiana and Mississippi school districts affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Following consultation with the respective district and state superintendents of education in Louisiana and Mississippi, Energy for Learning has been developed to address the education priorities of 23 school districts by equipping public schools with academic materials and technology such as science labs and I.T. equipment, as well as reinstating student programs that help develop physical and personal skills. Energy for Learning will also provide support for the restoration of child-care facilities in Mississippi, replicating Chevron's successful Daycare Restoration Project in the state, where Chevron restored 40 child-care centers damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

### Northrop-Grumman

Mississippi's largest employer, Northrop Grumman in Pascagoula, maintains a strong commitment to programs that improve education, human services and culture and that address diversity. One of their philanthropic arms, The Northrop Grumman Foundation, provides support for education opportunities through diverse and sustainable programs, giving priority to literacy, math, science and technology programs spanning pre-college through collegiate levels.

The Northrop Grumman Foundation's Employee Matching Gifts for Education Program's purpose is to acknowledge and support our employee's support for education. The Northrop Grumman Foundation does not match employee gifts for anything other than education.

### Wal-Mart

The Mississippi Department of Education has submitted a proposal to Wal-Mart to host an event that brings children, parents and teachers from all over the state to celebrate how Mississippi is raising expectations and raising achievement. It will also serve to encourage them to raise expectations of themselves. The goal of the event is for the students to see themselves as rising stars. It is appropriate to hold the event on the Gulf Coast to symbolize how it is rising from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. The children will be selected to attend through an essay contest held statewide and judged by the local Wal-Mart stores.

### Legislative Leadership

Although the Mississippi Adequate Education Program has not been fully funded for the past three years, funding for K-12 education has increased each year.

Funding for the Mississippi Adequate Education Program

FY 2004	\$1,695,464,073
FY 2005	\$1,695,464,073
FY 2006	\$1,773,075,721

Many of the legislative leaders strongly support public education and work very hard to fully fund it. Many have expressed support for the draft plan, “Redesigning Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce in Mississippi,” including providing funding, which totals \$120 million over five years, including a \$2 million designation for leadership improvement.

## Crucial Role of Kellogg Foundation

### Impetus for Change

There is a great demand on public resources and public education represents a large portion of that demand, therefore there is an increased expectancy of achievement for our schools and students. With increased accountability and transparency, the public knows to a greater extent than ever before just how successful our schools are.

There is great political pressure to move Mississippi forward. We must have trust and involvement between the white and African American communities that will lead to collective advocacy for public education. Both groups must succeed if either is to succeed.

The existing business community in Mississippi must have the work force necessary to be successful if they are to remain in the state. Some businesses find cheaper labor overseas so we must provide workers that offer much more than just cheap labor. With the location of the Nissan plant in central Mississippi in the last few years, the pressure to produce a skilled, trained work force is greater than ever. Certainly, a successful educational system is the key to any future economic development in the state. The Mississippi Economic Council and the Mississippi Manufacturers Association support the plan for *Redesigning Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in Mississippi* and the changes it will bring to the future business climate of our state.

Parents also expect schools to meet many needs of their children, from providing excellent instruction to nutritious meals, from keeping them safe on the bus to keeping them on grade level

with additional services when necessary. Parents have an important voice in the educational system.

Community members and community organizations must be mobilized to contribute to the transformation of Mississippi Public Education. Many citizens and community-based organizations are willing to participate with and contribute to Public Education but are not sure how to access schools; while school leaders and teachers are often ill-prepared to maximize the contributions of the community. Community members are critical constituents and with the implementation of the Innovation and Partnership Center will have greater access to schools and schools will develop increased opportunities for community participation.

The Mississippi Board of Education is poised and ready to make the policy changes necessary to dramatically improve education in Mississippi. Understanding that this is not a short-term initiative but a plan for long-term, sustainable change, the Mississippi Board of Education and the Mississippi Department of Education are fully prepared to lead the charge and form the partnerships necessary to turn this vision into reality.

The following pages outline a plan and a budget that addresses all five variables. Mississippi can improve the quality of its education system, but it will take resources that Mississippi does not have. This plan has worked on both the school and district level.

Successful implementation of this plan has national implications. Once successful in Mississippi, a state that has been plagued with high poverty, limited resources and low scores for decades, this plan will stand as a testament to what is possible when the right people, utilizing the resources necessary, put into place the right processes to make tremendous changes for boys and girls. The plan can then be replicated on a national scale and change the face of American education dramatically.

The Kellogg Foundation can play a crucial role in the development of this plan because it:

- Shares the vision of what education can provide for students, both today and well beyond the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
- Has the resources necessary to implement the plan; and
- Operates beyond the political constraints that have hampered educational progress in the United States for decades.

#### Budget

Please see the following attachments:

- Attachment A: Financial Support for Mississippi K-12 Education  
*Five-Year Summary of Contributors, Partners and Legislative Request*
- Attachment B: Kellogg Foundation Five-Year Grant Request  
*Mississippi Center for Education Innovation*

### Implementation Strategies

### Establish a Center for Education Innovation

Utilizing Kellogg Foundation funding and created in partnership with the Kellogg Foundation, a Mississippi Center for Education Innovation will be created. Kellogg funding will flow through the Foundation for the Mid-South. The goals of the Center are to improve/increase curricula and assessment, teacher quality/quantity, administrator quality/quantity, community development, and fundraising. The State Superintendent of Education will serve on a private board that will collaborate with the Center for Education Innovation to lead a network of partners for education in Mississippi. The Mississippi Department of Education will work with the private board and the Center for Education Innovation to provide the leadership, infrastructure and governance of the overall effort to transform Mississippi's educational system.

- **The Leader/Manager for the Center for Education Innovation will:**
  - o Provide leadership and management of its mission.
  - o Work with the board of the Center for Education Innovation.
  - o Coordinate all aspects of the work of the Center.
  - o Manage all day-to-day functions of the Center.
  - o Be responsible for implementation of the objectives and goals and timelines for the Center's mission.
  - o Be responsible for success by conducting grant evaluation reviews.
  
- **The Grant Writer/Promotions Specialist for the Center for Education Innovation will:**
  - o Seek and obtain additional funding streams to fulfill the mission of the Center.
  - o Seek and obtain additional grant funding through public and private entities.
  - o Market the goals and objectives of the Center.
  - o Monitor trends in educational grants on a state, national and international basis.
  - o Offer professional development to train school districts on effective grant writing.
  
- **The Professional Development Specialist for the Center for Education Innovation will:**
  - o Coordinate curriculum and assessment programs statewide to accelerate student learning.
  - o Research best practices on both state and national levels.
  - o Offer professional development on the most effective research-based teaching and learning strategies.
  - o Coordinate work of private sector providers to ensure consistent effort.
  - o Set goals and track progress in student achievement.
  - o Offer professional development on technology and workforce development.
  
- **The Leadership Development Specialist for the Center for Education Innovation will improve the quantity and quality of teachers by:**
  - o Improve the quantity and quality of teachers and school administrators by implementing effective research-based teacher recruitment and retention strategies and school administration strategies.
  - o Work with secondary and post-secondary institutions to increase interest in the field of education.

- o Monitor alternate route programs to ensure they are fulfilling intended mission and explore ways to improve the process.
  - o Establish a strong statewide mentoring program for teachers and administrators.
  - o Offer professional development on effective research-based classroom management and discipline.
  - o Research the best practices in teaching and school administration on both state and national levels.
  - o Offering professional development on effective research-based school management techniques.
  - o Identify potential leaders from both the teacher ranks and non-education fields.
- **The Community and Parent Relations Development and Enhancement Specialist for the Center for Education Innovation will:**
    - o Improve public perception of K-12 education in Mississippi.
    - o Coordinate communications efforts to parents and all stakeholders.
    - o Develop a branding campaign to communicate value of education.
    - o Monitor state and national education issues to develop strategies to address them.
    - o Offer professional development to train school districts on effective communications and parent relations.
    - o Work with business and industry to monitor current and future workforce needs.

### The Policy Agenda

The *Theory of Action* articulated in the proposal (Appendix A) establishes the ultimate outcomes which include *State Policies and Programs support public education*. It is not sufficient to design and implement quality practices, pedagogies, programs and partnerships unless there is an intentional focus on sustainability; thus the role of policy. The following provides an overview of a set of interdependent policy strategies – a policy agenda for *Mississippi Rising*.

This policy agenda guides the research, design, implementation and sustainability of the Mississippi education system. It is intended to ensure alignment of policies leading to student, system and community outcomes and impacts. Public policy is the sum of decisions made by elected and appointed leaders about specific issues. The *Mississippi Rising* education policy agenda focuses on four complementary processes:

1. Governance: *policies establishing the system of governance, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and interactions among responsible entities.*
2. Alignment: *policies that align all education issues as well as align education policy with other social, economic and political issues.*
3. Sustainability: *policies that successfully sustain effective education programs, pedagogies and partnerships for student achievement.*
4. Accountability: *policies that create accountability systems for education stakeholders.*

There are two ways the policy agenda should be implemented to achieve the goals of *Mississippi Star Power*. First, to focus on three organizational structures: state, district and school; second, to focus on education stakeholders and their roles in transforming and sustaining quality education in Mississippi.

The following chart analyzes this policy agenda.

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Organizational Unit</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
A more rigorous curriculum and assessment program	<i>Mississippi Star Power</i> will ensure that curriculum and assessments are aligned and supported by policy at the state, district and school levels ensuring consistency and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislators</li> <li>• Executive</li> <li>• State Board of Education</li> <li>• School Board</li> <li>• District Superintendent</li> <li>• School Principal</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>
Increasing the quantity and quality of teachers	<i>Mississippi Star Power</i> will integrate policies at the state, district and school levels that define teacher quality, provide effective professional development and provide an accountability system that ensures appropriate and effective recruitment and training occurs for Mississippi to retain its quality teachers and achieve the goals of <i>Mississippi Rising</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislators</li> <li>• Executive</li> <li>• State Board of Education</li> <li>• School Board</li> <li>• District Superintendent</li> <li>• School Principal</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>
Increasing the quantity and quality of school administrators	<i>Mississippi Rising</i> will integrate policies at the state, district and school levels that define principal quality, provide effective professional development and provide an accountability system that ensures appropriate and effective recruitment and training occurs for Mississippi to retain its quality school leaders to achieve the goals of <i>Mississippi Rising</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislators</li> <li>• Executive</li> <li>• State Board of Education</li> <li>• School Board</li> <li>• District Superintendent</li> <li>• School Principal</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>
Enhancing the culture of	<i>Mississippi Rising</i> will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislators</li> </ul>

education in Mississippi	integrate policies at the state, district and school levels that define the appropriate role for diverse community members and organizations to contribute to and benefit from Mississippi education system. This includes sustaining teaching and learning strategies that engage and improve the community (e.g., service-learning, etc.); volunteer opportunities with the schools; internships and community-based mentoring programs; etc. to achieve the goals of <i>Mississippi Star Power</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive</li> <li>• State Board of Education</li> <li>• School Board</li> <li>• District Superintendent</li> <li>• School Principal</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>
Redesigning the public education system	<i>Mississippi Star Power</i> will integrate policies at the state, district and school levels that define, support and sustain the qualities of an effective state, district and school system. This includes policies that focus on accountability for all stakeholders and a commitment to utilize data to improve performance and achieve the goals of <i>Mississippi Star Power</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislators</li> <li>• Executive</li> <li>• State Board of Education</li> <li>• School Board</li> <li>• District Superintendent</li> <li>• School Principal</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>

The policy agenda will be implemented as soon as possible to

- Identify/inventory current policies,
- conduct a gap analysis identifying the gap between desired policies that support *Mississippi Star Power* and existing policies,
- analyze policy impediments (that is, either current policies that impede successfully integrating and sustaining the implementation strategies or current policy environments that may inhibit development of supportive policies),
- identify quality policy options that can be adopted or adapted in Mississippi, and
- establish a timeline for implementing the corresponding policy agenda.

**The Civic Engagement Agenda**

The *Mississippi Star Power* civic engagement agenda aligns with the goals, interventions, collaborations, implementation strategies, the role of the community and the policy agenda and focuses on three specific entities:

- Mississippi K-12 students
- Mississippi schools
- Mississippi community members and organizations.

The civic engagement agenda engages current community members and create a new generation of Mississippi citizens committed to improving the quality of their life, their community and their state by actively participating in civic events and performing their civic responsibilities.

An important facet of community engagement is helping the community to recognize the untapped potential that lies within the children of their community. In particular, the Delta region of Mississippi, with its history of poverty and low expectations, could benefit from knowing how gifted and talented its youngest citizens are.

Typically, preschool potentially gifted students are only identified by their parents who are financially responsible for the individual testing necessary for identification. Due to economic circumstances, this is not an option for most families. A mass-screening project to identify students and remove the financial burden from the family would be extremely beneficial for the children of the Delta, their families and their communities.

Once students are scored and a list of children identified as gifted is provided with the appropriate school district personnel, additional training and workshops for the teachers regarding best practices will be needed. Ongoing support for school districts and gifted children identified during the mass-screening phase is also an essential element of serving this under-identified and under-served population.

Literature shows that with early identification, potentially young gifted children who are at risk for developing early signs of underachievement may instead be able to develop their academic endeavors. The earliest academic intervention is desired to allow these students the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. These students should be provided services that are appropriate for their own individual level of cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development.

Published literature also shows that young non-reading students with emerging gross- and fine-motor skills need to have screening measures that factor in these characteristics for accurate identification. Research also shows that students from economically disadvantaged areas may go undetected due to lack of cultural capital. The screening instruments used should address these factors. When children from a community are identified as gifted, it will become a source of pride for them and also raise the expectations they have of themselves and the student population. This will result in both greater community support for the schools and increased student achievement.



The student focus is to ensure students are provided quality opportunities to acquire and enhance civic knowledge, skills and dispositions so that they *now* and *in the future* are active principled contributors to their community.

The school focus is to create and sustain school systems, classrooms and internal and external collaborations organized using the principles of democracy; so that students understand and experience actual civic engagement.

The community member and community organization focus is to ensure current and future members of Mississippi communities contribute to education and local schools by volunteering, mentoring, providing quality internships and leadership.

### *Student Focus*

In order for Mississippi K-12 students to overcome the challenges of high poverty, low achievement, high dropout rates and lack of adequate resources they must understand their role as active principled citizens today and in the future.

*Mississippi Star Power* is committed to a quality education for all students, which includes a focus on the basic democratic principles of our nation and state. This begins with a formal commitment to three dimensions of student civic competencies:

- Knowledge
  - Civic-related knowledge, both historical and contemporary, such as understanding the structure and mechanics of constitutional government, and knowing who the local political actors are and how democratic institutions function
- Skills
  - Cognitive and participative skills (and associated behaviors), such as the ability to understand and analyze data about government and local issues, and skills that help a student resolve conflict as part of a group
- Dispositions
  - Core civic dispositions (motivations for behavior and values/attitudes), which can include support for justice and equality and a sense of personal responsibility. Participation-related dispositions include support for norms of participation, and expectations of actual political or social involvement. Students will not necessarily connect knowledge and skills to these civic dispositions without experience or a reason to believe their participation is worthwhile.

### *School Focus*

School will adopt appropriate pedagogies (e.g., service-learning, project-based learning, mock elections, etc.) to ensure authentic opportunities for students to acquire and practice democratic skills, as well as contribute to their communities through authentic civic engagement.

In addition to pedagogy schools must create and sustain a climate that adheres to basic democratic principles. The following seven broad characteristics of a school civic climate serve to both provide quality opportunities to students to acquire civic knowledge, skills and dispositions as well as understand their role in their communities.

1. Official recognition and community acceptance of the civic purpose of education that is communicated to all education stakeholders
2. Meaningful learning of civic knowledge that builds on and enhances academic and civic participation skills
3. Cooperation and collaboration in approaches to civic learning
4. Mutual trust and positive interactions among diverse students, teachers and administrators
5. Students' input in planning and participatory problem-solving that is valued
6. Deliberation and dialogue about issues that are thoughtful and respected
7. Engagement with the school community and commitment to learn about and interact with the broader community.

A civic school climate will be supported by corresponding policies, procedures, practices and partnerships that align with student competencies and community development. It is necessary to ensure that such a climate applies to all members of the school community as well as express to the community at large the civic virtues and values of the school.

### *Community Focus*

The community member and community organization focus is to ensure current and future members of Mississippi communities contribute to education and local schools by volunteering, mentoring, providing quality internships and leadership.

Schools must create a climate and formal opportunities for community members and organizations to contribute to the learning experience of all students. Thus, *Mississippi Star Power* will ensure that school create and sustain a civic climate and engage diverse members of the community in planning, programs and partnerships. In addition school principals will be trained to adequately and effectively maximize community assets and contributions to their schools, so that the community feels it is *their* school, rather than a place for children during the day.

This community focus aligns with the commitment to community engagement expressed as a central tenet within *Mississippi Star Power*. Secretary Bounds is making a commitment to ensure authentic community engagement in the design, implementation and sustainability of the five critical interventions to meet the *Mississippi Star Power* objectives; asking the question how can the community engage in?

- A more rigorous curriculum and assessment program
- Increasing the quantity and quality of teachers
- Increasing the quantity and quality of school administrators
- Enhancing the culture of education in Mississippi
- Redesigning the public education system

This commitment to community engages current citizens as well as creates a future generation of actively engaged citizens that understand and support quality public education.

### Measurable Outcomes

1. Decrease the dropout rate by 50% over the next five years.
2. Increase the NAEP scores to the national average in seven years.
3. Increase parental, community, business and political support and involvement in public education.
4. Improve teacher quality and quantity.
5. Improve administrator quality and quantity.
6. Create school environments that are user-friendly.
7. Increase student performance expectations of parents, community, business and state leadership.
8. Create public support for the creation of universally available quality pre-school opportunities.
9. Improve literacy rates statewide.
10. Create and sustain a workforce that responds to current and future needs
11. Ensure a set of policies at the state, school and community levels to support the vision of public education