Code of Ethics
Standards of Conduct

Also in this issue - MPE Gubernatorial Questionnaire
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Cover Stories

Gubernatorial Questionnaire
Page 12

Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct
Page 16

Cover artwork provided by the Mississippi Department of Education's Teacher Center.

In Every Issue

President's Message
Page 4
Sonya Swafford

Executive Director's Message
Page 5
Kelly Riley

Member Spotlight
Page 7, 11 & 13

Mississippi Department of Education News
Page 15

Community College News
Page 19

Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning News
Page 20

Features

Happy New “School” Year
Page 6
By Angela Towers, MPE Board of Directors

Connecting Universities and High Schools Through Environmental Education
Page 9
By Dr. Alan W. Barton, Delta State University

Retirement and Educators
Page 10
By Philene Allen, MPE Retiree Representative

MPE Board Retreat
Page 14
The MPE Board of Directors meets June 22-24 in Biloxi

MPE Area Directors
Page 23
Locate the Area Director for your district

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True Learning

An important discovery changed my teaching practice. The change came about during my National Board Certification experience. Because of National Board Certification, I learned how to be a Reflective Teacher. I learned to analyze why I do what I do. Prior to National Board Certification, I taught mandated benchmarks/framework. Thanks to the NBC process, I learned to observe my students to determine if true student learning has taken place. National Board Certification promotes five common core propositions for teachers.

Teachers:
• Are committed to students and their learning.
• Know the subjects they teach and how to teach them.
• Are responsible for managing/monitoring student learning.
• Think systematically about their practice and learn from the experience.
• Are members of Learning Communities. (NBPT)

To accomplish and implement these core propositions, I realized I had to know each student on an individual and personal basis. I inquired about their likes, dislikes, and interests. I implemented learning style and interest inventories. I gained input from parents and previous teachers. I no longer used only pass or fail evaluations. I had to develop new forms of assessments. I realized not only do children not learn the same – they do not test the same either.

Mohr helps define teacher reflection as inquiry that is intentional, systematic, ethical, and contextual. He further explains that reflective teachers methodically collect data from and with their students (2004). Mohr states that reflective teachers analyze and interpret their data with support from colleagues and input from parents (2004). From this they reflect and analyze what is and what is not working. Teachers can make the needed changes for students to obtain the goals that are needed for understanding and mastery.

Reflective teaching is a process, because once you start to implement changes, then the reflective and evaluative cycle begins again.
• What are you doing?
• Why are you doing it?
• How effective is it?
• How are the students responding?
• How can you do it better?

As a result of your reflection you may decide to do something in a different way, or you may just decide that what you are doing is the best. Reflective teachers learn a lesson on how to be effective, growing teachers. When teachers assume the responsibility for student learning through the practice of teacher reflection, we (teachers) become the true learners.

References
National Board Certification for Professional Teaching Standards (nbpts.org)
The start of a new school year is always a dynamic time here in the MPE office. Among other activities, we are processing new memberships, answering members’ inquiries, and distributing recruitment supplies to members throughout the state. Our Area Directors are busy visiting schools in their respective areas. I offer a special welcome to Jane Borgognoni, Ann Brinson, and Nora Moore, all of whom have joined our Area Directors’ team in the recent months. You will find contact information for your Area Director on page 23 for your reference in requesting a visit to your school.

Another important activity we’ve had underway recently is our online membership survey. It has been 10 years since we last surveyed you, our members, for your input and feedback as to benefits and other services offered by MPE. Printing deadlines did not allow us to include the results in this issue, but you should have received the results via a weekly email. I want to offer a special “Thanks!” to those of you who took a few minutes to complete the survey. As MPE is your organization, your Board of Directors and staff value your opinion.

We have all experienced Mississippi’s campaign season these past few months. While the MPE Constitution prohibits our organization from endorsing political candidates, we strongly urge our members to exercise their right to vote and we provide information to assist you in making informed choices. The gubernatorial questionnaire on page 12 is provided for your reference in the November 8th General Election. I urge you to learn where all candidates stand on issues such as K-12 through university funding, early childhood education and the Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS). Come January, one of the first votes legislators elected in November could face may involve proposed changes to retirement benefits. This issue is important to any member of the PERS system who looks to receive a benefit from PERS in the future. Be sure to find out where your candidates stand on this issue.

Please take a few minutes to review the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct on page 16. The Code of Ethics applies to all persons licensed according to the rules established by the State Board of Education and protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators. You may also find a copy of the Code of Ethics in the Quick Links menu on our homepage (www.mpe.org), as well as a link to the Code of Ethics training video on the Educational Resources page of our website.

It is an exciting time for K-12 education in Mississippi. For the first time, preliminary test scores show Mississippi has over 50% of its students in grades 3 through 8 scoring in the proficient or advanced categories in Language Arts on the MCT2. Promising gains were also made in Math scores in Grade 3 and Grade 8. High school students also saw progress in test scores, with Algebra I and English II experiencing increases in the passing rate. As Mississippi Board of Education Chairman Charles McClelland stated, “These results indicate that the students of Mississippi will rise to our level of expectation. We must continue to expect more from our children and give them the tools they need to be successful.”

MPE is unique in that our membership is open not only to K-12 staff, but to staff of Mississippi’s community colleges and four-year institutions as well. Enrollment at our community colleges and universities continues to increase and these institutions play a significant role in our state’s future and growth. Please take a few minutes to read Drs. Eric Clark and Hank Bounds’ articles on pages 19 and 20 for more information about their systems’ great work. MPE is proud to partner with our community colleges and universities.

Whether your service to students and the future of our state is at the K-12, community college or university level, best wishes for a great year!
The beginning of each new school year brings nervousness and anxiety to many students and teachers in Mississippi. The moment local retailers begin to set up their back to school displays, my mind begins to race. I use this nervous energy to reflect and re-evaluate my professional practices. For me, this is an untraditional New Year’s Eve, in which I make professional resolutions to be the best educator that I possibly can. I encourage all educators to make a few “New School Year” resolutions with me. As professionals, we must resolve to be the best educators for the students of Mississippi. This means we must set a positive example for our students. For many of our students, schools and teachers are the only stable aspects of their lives; therefore, our actions should consistently reflect our values, beliefs, and philosophy of what education should be. Each year, my faculty and I reflect on programs, practices, procedures, and routines that were in place the previous year. We review data and think about how it effected and affected the students and overall school culture. If any program or practice does not positively affect student safety or achievement, it must be discontinued. With so little time to educate and give students everything they need, we cannot do anything just for the sake of doing something. Every action within a school must serve a specific purpose and produce a desired outcome. The new school year is the perfect opportunity to develop an educational utopia for students.

Just as teachers and administrators have thought about becoming better, many students have spent their summer planning to be better students. They have promised they will be more conscientious, study harder, and be better behaved. Many students begin the school year with just as much enthusiasm as their teachers. Unfortunately, a few students will be discouraged by a negative comment from a well-meaning educator attempting to “nip a problem in the bud” before it “gets out of hand.” The best thing an educator can say to a past-troubled students is, “We are going to have a great year!” Remember whatever you expect, you will get! During the first weeks of school, we must remember to allow students time and opportunities to change if they choose to do so. Every child’s slate should be wiped clean of previous years.

Although most traditional New Year’s resolutions are long forgotten by Valentine’s Day, we must remain diligent. There are many dire consequences for students and educators if we neglect our “New School Year” resolutions. We all know that schools can be pretty tough places during homecoming, the first cold snap, and spring; therefore, we must encourage our coworkers to remain positive and keep working toward our goal when these tough times approach. Each day, we must remind ourselves that our hard work is not in vain. The small seeds we plant in schools and classrooms today will eventually bloom in our communities and make them better places to live.

Just imagine…If every educator in Mississippi would resolve with me to be the best educator they could for 187 days, imagine the students we would touch, schools we would change, and lives we would save. Just imagine…
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

JIM BREWER RECEIVES GIVE AWARD

The Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service, in partnership with the Office of the Governor, recently honored more than a dozen residents and organizations for the differences they have made in their communities and in our state. The annual Governor’s Initiative for Volunteer Excellence (GIVE) Awards are designed to distinguish individuals, programs, and organizations whose significant volunteer efforts have had a positive impact on their community and the State of Mississippi. We want to congratulate Dr. Jim Brewer of Hazlehurst, a founder of MPE, on receiving the GIVE Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts and Humanities.

MPE HONORS CLAY WALL, SOLDIER AND EDUCATOR

MPE Member Clay Wall is currently deployed with the B-Battery 1-204th ADA for the C-RAM Mission in Iraq. He and his wife, Lori, have both been members of MPE for many years. When he is not overseas, Clay teaches at Puckett Attendance Center. When thinking about his two separate careers, Clay says that “being a soldier has influenced my life immeasurably. I use my military training every day in the classroom. Being a soldier makes me a better teacher, and being a teacher makes me a better leader of soldiers.” As the 10th Anniversary of the 9/11 attacks has been on all of our minds recently, MPE wants to take this opportunity to thank Clay and Lori for not only their dedication to educating the students of our state, but also for their dedicated service to our nation!

MORE MPE MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

MPE would like to congratulate Shari Medley on the completion of her doctoral course work this past May. She received her Educational Specialist degree from Liberty University and graduated with a 4.0 GPA. Shari has been a member of MPE since 2006. A resident of Ocean Springs, she teaches 8th grade reading at St. Martin Middle School. Congratulations, Shari!

MPE would like to congratulate Arlene Monk on earning her Master of Business Education degree from Mississippi College. She began her graduate work in June 2009 and graduated in May 2011. Arlene is a Special Education/Business teacher at Forest High School and has been a member of MPE since 2008. Congratulations, Arlene!

MPE is proud to congratulate and honor Karen Leffler from Purvis High School who was recognized in April by the Mississippi Economic Council as a STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Recognition) Teacher. She was inadvertently left off of our list in the spring edition of the MPE Journal. We apologize for the omission! We had 39 MPE members recognized as STAR Teachers this year. Congratulations to them all again!
RECRUITMENT INCENTIVES

We have just finished a great year, and we want to thank you for all of your efforts in helping us reach our goal of “10,000 members in 2010.” With your help, we did it! MPE is THE largest professional organization for educators in the state. Your MPE Board of Directors has approved the following incentive scale to reward you for your recruiting efforts.

- Five new members = one year’s free membership
- 6-9 new members = one year’s free membership + $10 per member*
- 10-14 members = one year’s free membership + $15 per member*
- 15 or more new members = one year’s free membership + $20 per member*

You will receive $5 per student member recruited.

Recruitment bonus checks will be awarded at the end of each quarter, with the first quarter beginning July 1 and ending September 30. Credit will be given for each new member who joins or re-joins** between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012. Free memberships will be credited towards the next year’s membership.

* credit will be given for each additional member after 5
** member must have previously been made inactive for a period of three months or more

MPE Debuts New Recruitment Video

We are excited to announce that MPE has a brand new recruitment tool!

Check out our new video at www.mpe.org!

Please encourage your friends and co-workers who may not be MPE members to watch it, as the video features testimonials from several of our members about the benefits they have received from their MPE membership.

Please contact your building representative or our office if you would like a copy to show to your school faculty!
Educators have an inherent interest in preparing students for college and in finding the best teachers for Mississippi classrooms, yet high school and college faculty rarely collaborate directly to create experiences that make these possibilities real to their students.

Over the past two years, a multifaceted environmental education project centered in Bolivar County has linked high school and college teachers, as well as graduate, undergraduate and high school students, who visited each other’s classrooms, collaborated on community service projects, and took field trips together to Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge (DNWR).

The project began in the Spring of 2010 with a weekly Seminar in Environmental Education, offered at Delta State University (DSU). Biology teachers from West Bolivar High School in Rosedale and Ray Brooks High School in Benoit were invited to participate, and four of them joined DSU students and community members to learn about the Delta’s natural heritage from a variety of guest speakers. As part of the seminar, participants carried out three field experiences at the DNWR, then, at the end of the semester, the high school teachers led their students on two field trips to the refuge.

The seminar established relationships between teachers and students which blossomed into additional projects. For example, an arts educator who took the seminar returned to lead the high school classes in creating wildlife-themed murals. She led students on a field trip to DNWR and helped them develop their artistic skills as well as their appreciation of the natural world. Producing art in nature forces students to focus their attention on natural elements, and brings lessons learned in biology class to life.

College and high school students also collaborated on environmentally themed community service projects during the Fall of 2010. DSU students in a course on Sustainable Development teamed up with high schoolers to construct butterfly gardens at the schools, to build and install bird boxes at DNWR, and to develop a public service announcement to advertise the refuge on television. Carrying out the projects required college students to visit the high school classrooms to organize students, and brought high school students to college classrooms to report on their progress. The high school students also prepared and presented proposals to college faculty in order to receive funding for the projects. The students interacted with the goal of finishing their projects, but in the process learned much more.

This project opened up possibilities for high school students that they might not have considered. They were able to participate in a college class, and even speak in front of the class. After this, the doors to college seem wide open. College students that might not have considered teaching now have direct experience that may open up a career path. They had a chance to test their knowledge and skills, and could make a more informed decision about teaching as a career.

By centering the project on the wildlife refuge, interaction was not limited to the students’ home turf; they also had a neutral location where they could collaborate with specific goals to accomplish. Working together not only raised environmental awareness, it opened several other new doors to participants.

Funding for this project was provided by the Friends of Dahomey National Wildlife Refuge, through grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Mississippi Arts Commission.
RETIREMENT AND EDUCATORS
By Philene Allen, MPE Board of Directors

I have heard grandparents say “If I’d known grandchildren were so much fun I’d have had them first.” Well, if I’d known retirement was going to be so much fun, I might have done it first! The past ten years have been wonderful fun-filled years with many different experiences. One constant has been membership and involvement in MPE.

We have a membership classification to fit your needs as a retired educator. Our “part-time” membership is perfect for you if you’ve chosen to still be involved in schools after retirement in a part-time capacity. The dues are only $60 a year and include everything your regular membership covered. If you are truly retired and “going home,” the retired membership is perfect for you. It is only $10 a year, and you receive everything except the professional liability protection and accidental death insurance coverage.

I’d also like to take this opportunity to encourage all retirees to be informed as elections are approaching. Don’t assume that all the candidates are supportive of the Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS). MPE sent questionnaires to gubernatorial candidates and the responses are in this Journal as well as on our website (www.mpe.org). Statewide and legislative candidates’ responses to The Parents’ Campaign questionnaire can be found at www.msparentscampaign.org. The Mississippi Retired Public Employees Association (MRPEA) also conducted a survey and will share their results with you. You may email them at mrpea@bellsouth.net.

I consider it a privilege to represent the retired educators of MPE. If I can be of any assistance, please contact me at phileneallen@bellsouth.net or call me at 662-588-9011.
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

BECKY HAYES JOINS MPE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MPE wants to welcome Becky Hayes to our Board of Directors. She represents District 4. Becky received her Bachelor of Science degree from MUW in 1989 and her Master of Education degree from Mississippi State in 1993. She received her National Board Certification in 2004. Becky has been a member of MPE since 1989 and teaches 2nd and 3rd grade gifted at New Hope Elementary in Lowndes County.

DR. BENNY HORNSBY’S NEW DEVOTIONAL BOOK TO BE RELEASED

MPE President-Elect, Dr. Benny Hornsby, has written a new book entitled A Navy Chaplain’s Devotions for Afloat and Ashore. This collection of devotions was originally written for Navy and Marine Corps personnel, but it is truly appropriate for anyone who needs encouragement or is struggling with the challenges of life. These devotions were written during Benny’s thirty-six year career on active duty in the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps and were presented around the world on ships, and in Navy chapels, hospitals and prisons, as well as at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. The book will be available in all 152 Southern Baptist bookstores and online as an e-book in mid-October. Dr. Hornsby is a retired captain of the U.S. Navy and an instructor of social sciences at Pearl River Community College.

MOSS POINT EDUCATOR RECOGNIZED AS MPE’S FIRST EDUCATOR OF EXCELLENCE

Mississippi Professional Educators recognizes outstanding educators who exemplify true professionalism and go above and beyond the call of duty every day. A resident of Grand Bay, AL, Sharon Long has been recognized as our first Educator of Excellence for her work in the Moss Point School District.

A member of MPE since 2007, Sharon is an art teacher with 18 years of teaching experience. During her first 14 years of teaching high school, she developed three AP art classes and introduced a ceramics class. She continued her ceramics class when she moved to the Moss Point school district four years ago to teach at Magnolia Junior High School. She enjoys teaching students about a wide variety of art forms including quilting, knitting, and weaving pine straw baskets. Sharon’s enthusiasm for sharing art with her students and community is inspiring and uplifting!

MPE wants to thank Sharon for her hard work and professionalism, as well as the positive influence she provides to her students. She is now teaching at Forrest County Agricultural High School. MPE wishes Sharon Long the very best for continued success!
The MAEP is underfunded by approximately $237.5 million for FY 2012. What steps will you take in working with the Mississippi State Legislature to provide full funding of the MAEP by FY 2014?

Phl Bryant: (Candidate did not respond to questionnaire.)

Johnny Dupree: We can increase revenue without raising taxes. Close tax loopholes that allow 80 percent of corporations to pay zero income taxes. Close loopholes that allow people to live here but claim residency in states like Tennessee with no income tax. Finally, review state leases to maximize revenue.

What is your position on state funding for a non-compulsory early childhood education program in Mississippi? If you support such a program, please identify your funding source for program development and operations.

Phl Bryant: (Candidate did not respond to questionnaire.)

Johnny Dupree: We need early childhood development for Pre-K students. A full state program is probably not immediately realistic. Therefore, we should enact a plan to incentivize daycares, churches and non-profits to use the curriculum of local elementary schools. We can pay for this using budgeting priorities outlined above.

How will you address Mississippi’s teacher shortage?

Phl Bryant: (Candidate did not respond to questionnaire.)

Johnny Dupree: We must treat teachers like the professionals they are. We must pay them competitive wages, we must provide them with the resources we promise and we must protect their benefits. My education plan accomplishes this. It will then be easier to recruit and retain quality educators in our public schools.

In 2007, the Legislature unanimously passed the Mid-Level Funding Act to appropriate to community colleges, per student, half way...
between K-12 and the regional universities. Yet, community college funding is nearly $2,400 per student short of that amount. Do you support making significant progress toward reaching the Mid-Level funding goal for community colleges?

**Phil Bryant:** (Candidate did not respond to questionnaire.)

**Johnny Dupree:** Ten years ago the state provided 40% of the community college budget. Today it provides approximately 30%. Student fees have grown from covering 20% of the budget to more than a third. This is a dangerous trend. Committing ourselves to funding the Mid-Level Funding Act is an absolute necessity.

Do you support converting Mississippi’s current retirement system from a defined benefit plan to a 401(k) type plan?

**Phil Bryant:** (Candidate did not respond to questionnaire.)

**Johnny Dupree:** If employees would like more choices from their plan, then I would support offering more choices. I would not, however, support changing our current model to force employees into something different. We have the strongest retirement system in the nation. We must protect it for current and future employees.

What steps will you take to stimulate Mississippi’s economy to ensure adequate state revenues to fully fund education and other critical state services?

**Phil Bryant:** (Candidate did not respond to questionnaire.)

**Johnny Dupree:** First would be Phase 1 of my education plan, which includes $85 million in tax cuts for public school teachers and parents. We must also focus on small business development. We need to offer better incentives to small businesses who want to expand or open in Mississippi.

**MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

**FERRETTI NAMED IN TOP 40 UNDER 40**

MPE would like to congratulate and honor Leah Ferretti for being named to Bolivar County’s Top 40 Under 40! She is the Elementary Science Lab Instructional Specialist at Bell Academy in Cleveland and has been a member of MPE since 2010. Leah earned her Associate of Arts degree from Mississippi Delta Community College, her Bachelor of Science in Education from Delta State University, and is currently working on her Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Texas. She is married to Blake Ferretti, and they have one son, Thomas. Congratulations, Leah!

**MUHAMMAD EARNED DOCTORATE DEGREE**

Bridgette Muhammad recently received her Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Supervision. She graduated from Jackson State University with a 4.0 GPA! Bridgette has been a member of MPE since 1998, and she currently serves as assistant principal at A.W. Watson Elementary School in the Claiborne County School District. Congratulations, Dr. Muhammad!
Your MPE Board of Directors held its annual planning retreat June 22-24 in Biloxi. The Board hosted a reception and dinner for local educators and legislators Wednesday evening. Senator Tommy Moffatt and Representatives Billy Broomfield, Dirk Dedeaux, Jeffrey Guice, Randall Patterson, and Jessica Upshaw enjoyed visiting with MPE board members and their guests.

Thursday’s strategic planning session included discussion of MPE activities and operations for the upcoming year, including our membership survey which we hope you all participated in a few weeks ago! The board conducted its quarterly board meeting on Friday.

Your Board of Directors continues to give much of their time and efforts in advancing MPE. We certainly appreciate their leadership and service.
Fall is always an exciting time as the new school year begins. This time of year provides an opportunity for all of us in the education profession to reflect on what truly matters — providing a high quality education for all of the students in Mississippi. With that in mind, I would like to thank each of you for your hard work, dedication and commitment to the students of our state.

In Marc Tucker’s recent report, *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants* (National Council on Education and the Economy), it is clear that if we are to be globally competitive and economically sound, we must transform our system of education. There are several countries that we can learn from that have experienced a high degree of educational success. Singapore, Canada, Finland, and China have transformed how they educate students, and the results of those transformations are impressive.

One bold initiative that is helping Mississippi raise the bar in education is Common Core State Standards (CCSS). I am hopeful that Common Core is a familiar term to you by now. Common Core Training for grades K-2 began this summer and will continue through the year 2013 with training for grades 9-12. Final assessments are expected to be in place in 2014-2015. The implementation of CCSS will be an intensive process, but the results of these enhanced expectations will prepare students to compete in the global economy. By creating a curriculum that includes rigorous content requiring higher-order thinking and application of knowledge and skills, our graduates will be better positioned to compete in our global society.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not mention how difficult this past school year was for many of our educators and students. Citizens of our state endured tornadoes, winter storms, flooding and many other challenges. School bus accidents resulted in the loss of cherished lives. We were able to make it through these difficult situations by having strong leaders in place and through the support of local communities. As we begin the 2011-12 school year, we can only anticipate what new challenges lie ahead. I know that once again, each of you will rise to whatever challenges you may face. It is important to remember that our students will also rise to meet the challenges and expectations that you set for them in the classroom.

As teachers, you have a wonderful opportunity to positively affect the lives of so many students in our state. Thank you for all that you do to provide the children of our state with a quality education. Best wishes for a wonderful back-to-school season and a safe and successful 2011-2012 school year. Please remember that the Mississippi Department of Education is here to help you as needed.
MISSISSIPPI EDUCATOR CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The State Board of Education adopted the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct this past February. The Code of Ethics was developed by a task force comprised of educators, elected officials, community leaders and MDE representatives. The Code applies to all persons licensed according to the rules established by the State Board of Education and protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators.

HB 641 passed during the 2011 Legislative Session supports this Code of Ethics and allows MDE to take action against a license without waiting for a court conviction on a sexual offense. In addition, districts may now be fined for failing to report sexual misconduct. Those matters previously addressed in state law which may result in license revocation - felonies, actions against a license out of state, termination by a school board, sexual convictions - will be handled as they have been in the past.

Standard 1: Professional Conduct
An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

1.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
   b. Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment
   c. Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning
   d. Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner
   e. Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter and pedagogical practices
   f. Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establish appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children.

1.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Harassment of colleagues
   b. Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
   c. Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity
   d. Physical altercations
   e. Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness
An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice and does not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

2.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
   b. Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
   c. Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

2.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following:
      1. employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
      2. information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
      3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
      4. reasons for absences or leave
      5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
   b. Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts
An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes and local school board policies.

3. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or sexual offense. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.
Standard 4: Educator/Student Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

4.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy, and encouragement for students.
   b. Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students
   c. Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement
   d. Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.

4.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:
   a. Committing any act of child abuse
   b. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
   c. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
   d. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
   e. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
   f. Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationship with students.

Examples of these acts may include, but not be limited to:

1. sexual jokes
2. sexual remarks
3. sexual kidding or teasing
4. sexual innuendo
5. pressure for dates or sexual favors
6. inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing or grabbing
7. rape
8. threats of physical harm
9. sexual assault
10. electronic communication such as texting
11. invitation to social networking
12. remarks about a student’s body
13. consensual sex.

Standard 5: Educator/Collegial Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with colleagues, both in and outside the classroom.

5. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:
   a. Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
   b. Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
   c. Interfering with a colleague’s exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities
   d. Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or family status
   e. Using coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues.

Standard 6: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

6.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice.

6.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
   b. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages. A school-related activity includes but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc. which involve students.
   c. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented using tobacco.

Standard 7: Public Funds and Property

An educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert,
or use funds, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

7.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds
   b. Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.

7.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Knowingly misappropriating, diverting or using funds, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain
   b. Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents or any school-related function
   c. Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
   d. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
   e. Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

**Standard 8: Remunerative Conduct**

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

8.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
   b. Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.

8.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body
   b. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
   c. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. (This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.)

**Standard 9: Maintenance of Confidentiality**

An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

9.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a legitimate purpose or is required by law
   b. Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.

9.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information family status/income and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
   b. Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school board or state directions for the use of tests
   c. Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

**Standard 10: Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment**

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local school board or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

10. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
   a. Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the school board
   b. Refusing to perform services required by the contract.
On May 7, the community college family lost one of our biggest supporters and friends with the passing of Senator Jack Gordon. Senator Gordon was a proud alumnus of Itawamba Community College and was responsible for some of the most important community college legislation in recent memory. In 2007, he authored the Mid-Level Funding Act which requires that per student community college appropriations shall be halfway between K-12 and the regional universities. In 2009, he introduced a bill that gave our agency six acres of land along Ridgewood Road in Jackson to be used for the first-ever community college headquarters building. Just this past legislative session, he offered an amendment to our appropriations bill to restore more than $15 million to get us to level funding compared to last year. During his time in the Legislature, Senator Gordon had a positive impact in many different parts of the state, and none more so than our community colleges.

I hope that each of you had a restful summer and that the beginning of the school year has gone well. In the educational world, the start of a new school year brings with it endless possibilities for all students—whether in K-12, community colleges, or universities. The number of students that will be taught this school year is amazing. Just at community colleges, we will educate more than 250,000 of our citizens—whether in academic courses, workforce training, career and technical education, or adult basic education.

In previous articles, I have talked about increased enrollment at our community colleges—31 percent in the past three years. Now we are graduating record number of students. During this past school year, our community colleges awarded 13,228 degrees during graduation ceremonies. This is an increase of 14.2 percent compared to the 2009-2010 school year. It is worth noting this figure does not include graduates during the summer term. This increase can be attributed to two things—a stronger effort to encourage students to stay at community colleges to complete their degrees, and the increased enrollments we have recently experienced. These folks will have an opportunity at a better life because of the education they received at a community college.

With the statewide General Election a few months away, I hope each of you will take an opportunity to discuss with your students the importance of voting and being a part of the electoral process. The folks that we elect in November (whether it be County Supervisor, State Legislator, or Governor) will be the ones making laws that will affect all levels of education for the next four years. Regardless of political affiliation, it is important that all eligible citizens vote in the November election.

During the 2011 legislative session, a bill was passed and signed by Governor Barbour to change our agency name to Mississippi Community College Board. Please note that this change took effect on July 1.

I hope everyone has the best school year ever, and thanks for all your hard work!
Dr. Hank M. Bounds
Commissioner of Higher Education

EDUCATORS SERVE AS STATE’S PRIMARY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DRIVERS

When you think of economic development in Mississippi, you may picture the head of a large corporation making the decision to expand or locate a manufacturing plant here. You may think of the local economic developer working to promote the community’s virtues to chief executive officers and other business leaders. You may also think of the state legislators, governor and other state leaders who work to bring businesses to Mississippi, often passing incentive packages to help create jobs.

However, attracting businesses and creating jobs is only part of the economic development picture. Educators play a vital role in helping Mississippi’s economy grow. Without Mississippian’s ready and able to fill the jobs created by business, government and civic leaders, the businesses cannot succeed. In fact, without an educated workforce, attracting businesses to the state would be an impossible task.

The third grade teacher who ensures that every child is reading on grade level before leaving her classroom has a tremendous impact on Mississippi’s economy. We know that those who cannot read on grade level by the end of the third grade are exponentially more likely to drop out of high school and are also more likely to end up in prison or in need of social services provided by the state. A teacher that helps 27 children each year learn to read and teaches for 30 years has saved the state millions in funds spent on social services or incarceration. She has also earned the state millions in tax revenue from income tax generated by her students as they have grown up and moved into the workforce.

The college professor teaching the next generation of teachers, doctors, engineers and social workers also has a tremendous impact on Mississippi’s economy. In college, students gain the specialized careers skills needed to succeed in their chosen career paths, along with the critical thinking skills and global perspective needed to be leaders. A 2006 analysis by the University Research Center found that for every dollar invested in someone who ultimately receives a high school diploma, the state will receive $1.21 return in the form of tax revenues. For those individuals that receive a bachelor’s degree the return was $2.13. In other words, Mississippi’s investment in education pays off.

I have been pleased to serve as chair of Blueprint Mississippi this year. It is a privately-funded initiative that will give us a roadmap to a more prosperous, vibrant and resilient Mississippi, built upon a foundation of economic opportunity for all its citizens. We have met with business and civic leaders across the state, garnering feedback from over 3,000 Mississippian’s in the process.

We asked them a number of questions, but one of the most significant to me was the question: Do you believe Mississippi children will be able to find good-paying jobs in Mississippi, or will they have to leave the state to find good-paying jobs when they are ready to enter the workforce?

Fifty-one percent said they will find good jobs, 49 percent said they must leave to do so. Business leaders answered this question similarly in an earlier poll. However, in a separate but similar survey of Mississippi voters, 62 percent believed that today’s youth would have to go out of state to seek good employment. Certainly, as a parent of two Mississippi children, I hope that they will have the opportunity to grow up and fulfill their dreams right here in the state.

There is optimism that we will reach that point. When considering the state’s future in 10 years, 81 percent of
Road Show attendees answered positively, rating Mississippi as an emerging growth state, a hot economic development location, or a sought-after tourism destination.

The Blueprint Initiative will provide us with a plan for how we move from where we are now to the emerging growth state, a hot economic development location, or a sought-after tourism destination that we all believe we can be. To develop the plan, we are examining Four Focus Areas:

- Educational Achievement
- Resource Management
- Economic Competitiveness
- Technology Commercialization

We’re also taking into consideration some broader issues that transcend and connect the Four Focus Areas:

- Community Life
- Healthcare
- Infrastructure
- Racial Reconciliation

Far and away the most significant input, shared by everyone in the state, regards education. Through the stakeholder input forms, every city reported “Education” as the number one concern for their community and the state. I believe the Blueprint recommendations, set to be released in October, will give us very clear directions on how we can best move the state forward. There is no question that Mississippi’s educators will play a large role in advancing the state.

As a new school year begins, we all look forward to seeing both new and returning students, feeling their excitement for learning and hope for the future. It is important that we remember as we touch the lives of each of our students we are creating a ripple effect that has a profound impact on our state and the quality of life we all enjoy. You hold tremendous power in your hands. I appreciate all you do to give each student an excellent education and our state a brighter future.

CONVENTION 2012
Mississippi Professional Educators

Mark your calendars now to attend MPE’s 2012 Convention on Saturday, April 14th at the Jackson Hilton. Ray McNulty, President of the International Center for Leadership in Education, will be our keynote speaker. Mr. McNulty has been an educator since 1973 and has served as a teacher, vice principal, principal, and superintendent, as well as Vermont’s education commissioner from 2001-2003. As commissioner he focused on aligning the Department of Education’s work on the key issues of early education, educator quality, and secondary school reform.

McNulty was a senior fellow at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation prior to joining the International Center. While at the Foundation he worked with leading educators from around the country to improve the nation’s high schools. Mr. McNulty is committed to raising performance standards for both teachers and students and to building solid connections between schools and their communities. He is a past president of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and is the author of It’s Not Us Against Them — Creating the Schools We Need, published in 2009 by the International Center.
Absolute Integrity.
Boundless Enthusiasm.
Consummate Quality.

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**Why MPE?**

The premier package of benefits for the least amount of money!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011 - 2012 DUES</th>
<th>MPE</th>
<th>OTHER ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional with liability insurance</td>
<td>$120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Couples with liability insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Teacher with insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retired Educator without insurance</td>
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<td>$60*</td>
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* May not include local dues

- Professional liability protection of $2 million with $3 million maximum (other organizations provide only $1 million with $3 million maximum)
- Legal assistance related to employment or professional matters per MPE policy
- $10,000 in accidental death & dismemberment coverage (one organization offers as an optional benefit at an additional cost and one provides AD&D benefits to new members for one year)
- $2,500 assault related property damage (5x the coverage of another organization)
- Only organization to provide identity theft coverage with membership
- Graduate & Undergraduate Scholarships awarded annually
- Unlimited professional advice available 24 hours per day/7 days per week (included with membership)
- Every dollar of your dues stays in Mississippi for your benefit! MPE does not utilize dues to support political candidates.