MPE's new President, Sonya Swafford

MPE seeking nominations for outstanding teachers

Current MPE membership at 10, 202

MPE Annual Convention Highlights

2011 Graduate and Undergraduate Scholarship Winners

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2011
2012

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MPE Journal - Spring/Summer 2011
MPE Journal

Executive Director
Kelly Riley

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MPE Journal is published three times annually by the Mississippi Professional Educators, Kelly Riley, Publisher.
“The future of the world is in my classroom today, a future with the potential for good or bad... Several future presidents are learning from me today; so are the great writers of the next decades, and so are all the so-called ordinary people who will make the decisions in a democracy. Only a teacher? Thank God I have a calling to the greatest profession of all! I must be vigilant every day, lest I lose one fragile opportunity to improve tomorrow.”

--Ivan Welton Fitzwater

A calling to the greatest profession of all...Aren’t we lucky we GET to teach!!

As incoming president to the greatest teacher organization in the state, I am honored to be a part of such an elite group. I am proud of the major accomplishments that we achieved this previous year such as exceeding our 10,000 member goal, offering a new credit union membership, and granting legal advice that saved 21 educators their jobs. My thanks go to past President Barry Morris for his dedication to the organization to reach these goals. My gratitude goes to Kelly, Brennan, Stephanie, Deanna, and Pam in the office for another great conference. If you missed it, Dr. Lynn House and Dr. Daphne Buckley shared the latest Department of Education updates. Felicia Johnson reminded us just how lucky we are as teachers. It was awesome. I really want to focus on “growing our conference.” It’s a best kept secret that needs to be shared with many other professional educators.

As president, my goal for the year is to focus on living up to our name- Mississippi Professional Educators. Mississippi teachers BEING professional educators! I want to bring teaching back in the limelight. At one time, teachers were honored and revered. Times have changed and so have attitudes. Ask yourself, “Why did I become a teacher?” Is your glass in the teaching profession half empty or half full?

There are great teachers all over our state “just doing their job,” but many go beyond the call of duty day in and day out. Do you know someone like that? I would like for us to honor our professional teachers by highlighting them in our weekly emails and our journals. I am asking for you to send your nominations of “professional” teachers into the office.

It’s time to reclaim teaching as a professional career. Our teachers are giving of themselves tirelessly and without any thanks. They are worthy. They are worthy to be honored. No, we don’t get paid millions to put a ball in a basket like some. But, we do get to shape minds, transform lives, and inspire children to change the world. That is priceless.

Join me and put on your rose-colored glasses and enjoy watching the cup overflow with teachers being highlighted for loving what they do! It’s going to be a great year!
MESSAGE FROM THE PAST-PRESIDENT
DR. BARRY MORRIS

What an incredible year! A time of celebration that began in 2010 and continues under the leadership of Sonya, Kelly, and Brennan into 2011-2012. It has been an honor to serve as your president because of your commitment to excellence, your passion for reaching all students, and your belief that as educators we freely give all children our best. Mississippi Professional Educators is founded on the principle that all educators should trust, respect and deeply care for all children.

We believe that Mississippi is a place worthy of raising our next generation. We are not dismayed by excellence, but rather challenged to bring the very best out of every child and young adult. We recognize that a truly responsive educational experience must begin at birth with the training of our newest generation of parents, continuing through early childhood exploration of the world through play and interaction, building a world of discovery that encourages children to construct their knowledge and understanding of that knowledge.

Our children and adolescents deserve a world class experience. The world continues to expand its information exponentially and requires world class thinkers and information gatherers. We seek to build the finest professional learning communities linked across Mississippi. We accept that each district is not alone, but linked to the Mississippi family. We cannot let a family member suffer when we have the resources, talents, and imagination to bring relief.

The Mississippi leadership should consider bringing master teachers out of retirement to mentor the thousands of newly graduated teachers who fill our schools. This is an opportunity for teacher leadership on a new statewide scale. Teacher Leaders must become an important asset to every school working as co-teachers across classrooms.

Mississippi Professional Educators is a family of educators who believe in outliving themselves. We teach to the generations. We teach for eternity. We teach so that the grandchildren of our students will know and remember our names. Continue the celebration. We have much to celebrate. They will come to our classroom doors on Monday.

Building Representatives

We will be mailing out building rep packets in early July. If you have had a change of address or have changed schools, please notify our office so we may update your profile. If you are NOT a BUILDING REP, but would like to inquire about being the building rep for your school, please contact Stephanie Miller at stephanie@mpe.org or call 1-800-523-0269.
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
KELLY RILEY

While this time of year brings the freshness and renewal of spring, it also tends to be one of the busiest times of the year. Our K-12 members have just completed state testing, field trips and end-of-year grades and reports. Our community college and university members have wrapped up one semester and are gearing up for summer classes. Here at the office, we have hosted a very successful convention and have started planning for the upcoming year. We have promotional materials to order, building rep packets to prepare, and logistics to coordinate for the board’s upcoming June strategic planning retreat.

This issue of your MPE Journal is full of great news! For those of you who were not able to join us on April 9, I hope you will enjoy pictures from our 32nd annual convention in this issue and online at www.mpe.org. We are also honoring our ten undergraduate scholarship recipients, as well as our five graduate scholarship recipients. MPE is proud to invest in the professional growth of our members. This issue also celebrates our members who were recognized this spring as their district’s Teacher of the Year, as well as those members honored as STAR teachers by their students.

Your MPE Board of Directors is comprised of sixteen members statewide who give of their time and service to lead MPE forward. I want to thank our Nominating Committee (Dr. Barry Morris, Sonya Swafford, Dr. Benny Hornsby and Rhonda Travis) for the outstanding slate of officers and new board members they presented during Convention 2011. We are honored to welcome Dr. Lela Hale (University) and Mary Hill Shular (Reps-at-Large) to our board and are thrilled to have Lynn Smither (Community College) and Philene Allen (Retirees) returning for another three-year term. Rhonda Travis and Dr. Levenia Maxwell-Barnes completed their board service this year after giving a combined sixteen years of service and leadership to our board. Thank you, Rhonda and Levenia!

Our planning for next year involves two particularly exciting endeavors that I want to share with you. We are in the midst of developing a 3-5 minute video to upload to our website and our Facebook page, as well as to provide copies to our building reps in schools around the state to play at staff meetings as a means of recruiting new members. This video, which will include several “testimonials” from members, will spotlight the benefits our members have gained from belonging to Mississippi’s largest and premier organization for professional educators. I am also excited to share with you that we will conduct an online survey of our membership next fall. 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.

I certainly hope you enjoy your summer. I realize that some of you will attend workshops or trainings during the summer, while others may travel, volunteer or spend time with family. Regardless, I hope you will take some well-deserved time for yourself. Thanks for your hard work during the 2010-2011 school year and best of luck as you start the new 2011-2012 year next fall!
MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Former MPE President, Dr. Steve Bishop, Named SMCC President

Southwest Mississippi Community College’s (SMCC) Board of Trustees unanimously selected Dr. Steve Bishop, SMCC’s vice president of student affairs, as the college’s new president in February. Bishop, who will become SMCC’s eighth president, was chosen after Dr. Oliver Young announced his decision to retire as president, effective June 30, 2011. “I am excited and humbled about being selected Southwest Mississippi Community College’s president and look to continue the excellence that is expected from this college. I am very fortunate to be a part of the Southwest family, and I look forward to this new role at the college. Southwest has an established group of dedicated employees, and together we will continue to provide quality education for the students of this community, state and region.”

A member of MPE since 1995, Bishop served as MPE’s 2005-2006 President. Bishop began his career at SMCC as an instructor in 1992. He is a 1988 graduate of Southwest Mississippi Junior College, earned a B.S. degree from the University of Southern Mississippi, and a Master’s of Arts from Southeastern Louisiana University. He was awarded his Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1997. Bishop, a native of Gillsburg, is married to Dr. Melanie Hammill Bishop of Poplarville. They are the parents of four children, Katherine, Ruth, and twins, Arthur and Eleanor.

Wheat Named State Finalist for Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science

Kristen Wheat, a member of MPE since 2007, has been chosen as a Mississippi state finalist for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) which is an awards program administered by the National Science Foundation on behalf of the White House. State mathematics and science finalists were recognized by the Mississippi State Board of Education in February, and a national panel of scientists, mathematicians, and educators will select one math teacher and one science teacher from each state. The teachers chosen as Presidential Awardees by the panel will receive a $10,000 award, a presidential citation, and trip to Washington, D.C. for a series of recognition events, programs and an awards ceremony.

Wheat is a science teacher at South Side Elementary School in the Picayune School District. She earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from William Carey University and has been teaching for thirteen years. She has previously been named a Teacher of the Year for her school and was the Leo Seal Teacher of the Year in 2008. “When students tell me they ‘love science’ or that ‘science is fun’ it really makes me glow knowing that I have played a role in developing a passion for learning,” Wheat shared. “I hope to see many of my students taking roles in a branch of science in the future.”

Ms. Wheat (left) pictured with Charles McClelland and Dr. Tom Burnham from the MDE.
2011 GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

MPE congratulates the following recipients of the 2011 MPE Graduate Scholarship Award. Each member will receive $1,000 towards their graduate studies.

BRAD JOHNS serves as chair of the math department at McLaurin High School in Rankin County. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Mathematics, his Master of Mathematical Education, and his Educational Specialist in Educational Leadership from Mississippi College. A member of MPE since 1994, Johns began his doctoral studies at Mississippi College in January 2011.

CATHRYN BRAMEL MILLER is a 2nd grade teacher at Holly Springs Primary School. She earned her Bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education from the University of Mississippi. A member of MPE since 2010, she is pursuing her Master’s degree in Elementary Education at Delta State University.

JEANIFER PEARSON is a gifted education teacher at Oak Park Elementary School in Laurel. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Microbiology from Mississippi State University, her Master’s degree in Secondary Education from William Carey College, and her Specialist in Education degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. A member of MPE since 2004, she is pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of Southern Mississippi.

JESSICA STEPHAN teaches 3rd grade teacher at Chickasaw Elementary School in Olive Branch. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Education from Union University. A member of MPE since 2006, she is pursuing her graduate studies in elementary education at Delta State University.

MINDY WALKER is a special education teacher at Starkville High School. She earned her Bachelor of Science in English Education from Mississippi State University. A member of MPE since 2008, she is pursuing her graduate studies in dyslexia therapy at Mississippi College.
MPE DISTRICT TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

MPE is proud to congratulate and honor the following members who were named their respective district’s 2011 Teacher of the Year.

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<th>MPE MEMBER</th>
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<tr>
<td>LaTifiney Burnside</td>
<td>Coahoma County</td>
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<td>Angela Crimm</td>
<td>Forest Municipal</td>
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<td>Gina M. Hataway</td>
<td>George County</td>
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<td>Angelia B. Brown</td>
<td>Hinds County</td>
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<td>Kelli Higginbotham</td>
<td>Jackson County</td>
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<td>Keri D. Padgett</td>
<td>Jones County</td>
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<td>Holli Adams Pepper</td>
<td>Lincoln County</td>
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<td>Angie Woodcock</td>
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<td>Maia Miller</td>
<td>New Albany Public</td>
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<td>Denika McLaurin</td>
<td>Newton Municipal</td>
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<td>Rebecca L. Nieman</td>
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<td>Joseph Todd Liddell</td>
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<td>Onita Sue Lee</td>
<td>Perry County</td>
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<td>Rita J. Warren Hill</td>
<td>Pontotoc City</td>
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<td>LaCosta S. Meadows</td>
<td>Simpson County</td>
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<td>Melody Baker Carter</td>
<td>Tate County</td>
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<td>Mary E. Jenkins</td>
<td>Union County</td>
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Nationwide, the online delivery of academic instruction has become a very popular teaching model, and Mississippi is no exception. For example, all of the community and junior colleges in the state participate in the Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC), and during the Spring 2011 semester, 30,116 students were enrolled in over 1,300 online classes. In addition to “traditional” classes, I have taught online for Pearl River Community College for the past four years, as well as for William Carey University, and in this article I will briefly share some of the things I have learned about successfully teaching online.

Here’s how I organize and teach my online courses:

1. At first, I did online what I do in the classroom; now I pretty much do in the classroom what I do online. I’ve gone “paperless,” and there is a synergistic relationship between the two types of classrooms.

2. I run my classes from Monday through Sunday night, with assignments being due at 11:00 p.m. on Sunday.

3. Students read the text; answer the questions in their workbook; read the chapter notes that I provide each week; watch a related Power Point or YouTube presentation; and, have practice tests.

4. On the interactive Discussion Board each week, I post an assignment involving their opinion about something we’ve read or talked about. In addition to a major post, they have to respond to two classmates in a meaningful way on different days.

5. Since I consider my courses to be “writing intensive,” students write an essay or “Reaction Paper” each week, which is directly related to something we’ve read about and discussed. This always requires outside research involving the Internet or the library.

I also follow some very basic rules that I think are essential to teaching successfully online. I call them the “Rules of the Virtual Road:”

a. Respect the model: Numerous studies show that online teaching can be as effective as that delivered in the traditional classroom. If you are still in doubt, take a course from a reputable, accredited school and see for yourself.

b. Build community: One of the major criticisms of online courses is the lack of face-to-face interaction with the instructor. I work from the first day of class to encourage a sense of “family” among my students.

c. Be kind to everyone: You can’t be too nice.

d. Have realistic rules and give realistic assignments.

e. Learn and use names and use them in your responses.

f. Be consistent: Follow the syllabus.

g. Make tests doable: Anyone can make a test no one can pass.

h. Focus on what’s important: No need to teach the whole book.

i. Grade and return tests and assignments in a timely manner.

j. Use the technology that’s available to you.

k. Vary styles of instruction: Remember that everyone learns in different ways.

l. Give timely feedback: My rule is to respond to every comment or question within 24 hours.

m. Never, ever, get into a confrontation with a student. You both lose.

n. I look on my job as a ministry. The bottom line is to care about the students.
MPE WELCOMES OUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PHILENE ALLEN - RETIREES
Philene Allen is returning to the Board to represent retired educators. A member of MPE since 1982, she previously served on the Board and was MPE President in 2000. She received her Master of Education degree from Delta State University. In 2000, after 36 years as an educator, Mrs. Allen retired and went to work for the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi. She is an active member of Delta Kappa Gamma. Currently she resides in Cleveland with her husband, Stuart.

DR. LELA HALE - UNIVERSITY
A member of MPE since 1991, Lela earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from Blue Mountain College, her Master’s degree in Elementary Curriculum and Instruction from Delta State University, a Specialist’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction and a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Mississippi. She earned National Board Certification in 2000. After 28 years of service as a public school educator, Dr. Hale now serves as the Director of Clinical Experiences and Assistant Professor of Education at Blue Mountain College.

MARY HILL SHULAR - REPRESENTATIVE -AT- LARGE
Mary Hill Shular has been an educator for 18 years and has spent 13 of those years as a career discovery teacher at West Lauderdale Middle School. She earned her Bachelor of Science and her Master of Science degrees in Technology and Education from Mississippi State University. Mrs. Shular earned her National Board Certification in Career and Technical Education in 2001 and again in 2010. She has been a member of MPE since 2007.

LYNN SMITHER - COMMUNITY COLLEGE
A member of MPE since 2003, Lynn Smither just completed her first year on the MPE Board and has been re-elected for a 3-year term. Mrs. Smither earned her Bachelor of Science in General Studies and her Master of Science in Education from Delta State University. She contributed her earlier years to K-12 education, before taking a position at Northeast Mississippi Community College, where she serves as the Dropout Recovery Coordinator.
MPE held its 32nd annual convention on Saturday, April 9th at the Jackson Hilton. Deputy State Superintendents Drs. Lynn House and Daphne Buckley shared the latest news from the MDE, including implementation of the Common Core and the Educator Code of Ethics. Felicia Johnson reminded us all that it is a privilege to be an educator and to impact our students’ lives. As always, MPE members enjoyed visiting and networking with each other. Visit www.mpe.org to view the 2011 convention photo gallery.
(From back left): Lela Hale, Philene Allen, Benny Hornsby, Barry Morris, Mary Hill Shular, Jamie Jackson, Nykela Jackson, Deedre’ Coll. (Front from left): Angela Towers, Donna Robbins, Sonya Swafford, Lynn Smither (Not pictured: Sunnie Barkley, Becky Hayes, Walter Moore & Mark Reddoch)

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2011 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

GENERAL BILL HIGHLIGHTS

■ HB 619 (Signed by Governor on 3/11/11) directs the State Department of Education to conduct a survey of each public school district to determine the feasibility of enrolling children who attain five years of age on July 1, as opposed to September 1, in public kindergarten and requires a report of the department’s findings be presented to the legislature for consideration by January 1, 2012.

■ HB 636 (Signed by Governor on 3/16/11) requires that homeschooled students be tested before being transferred into a public school district for grade assignment purposes. The requirement that a pupil take the standardized test shall be waived if the student is transferred or reassigned within the school district by order of the board of trustees of that school district as designated by law of the State of Mississippi and not at his own request, or if the student transfers from one school district to another school district in the manner provided and required by the laws of the State of Mississippi.

■ HB 641 (Signed by Governor on 4/26/11) creates a legal duty for superintendents and school principals to report all instances of sexual involvement of school employees with a student to the Mississippi Department of Education. The bill also provides specific grounds for revocation or suspension of a teacher’s or administrator’s license for sexual misconduct with a student and clarifies the requirements for issuing a standard license based upon reciprocity.

■ HB 875 (Signed by Governor on 3/11/11) directs the Mississippi Education Achievement Council to research and develop a new funding mechanism for community colleges and institutions of higher learning based upon productivity, as well as enrollment, and make a report to the legislature by November 1, 2012.

■ SB 2869 (Signed by Governor on 4/26/11) revises and clarifies the provisions relating to dual enrolled students and dual credit students. The bill provides that each local school board shall adopt and implement a written policy with regard to the school district’s mandate or requirement for the awarding of a minimum grade which is in compliance with the grading policy requirement established by State Board of Education Policy 403.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

■ HB 1494 (Signed by Governor on 4/26/11) is the K-12 Education appropriation bill for FY 2012. It provides level funding for teacher supplies, buildings and buses, and vocational and technical education. The National Board Certification Program is funded at $1 million less than the FY 2011 appropriated level per the State Department of Education’s request which was based on information the department has on this year’s actual spending level and program enrollment figures. This level of funding fully funds the National Board program and will not impact or decrease NBCTs’ $6,000 annual supplement. HB 1494 fully funds the Chickasaw Interest formula and provides $5.5 million, or 0.27%, less than the FY 2011 level for MAEP. This bill also provides $6 million less than last year to the Ad Valorem School Reduction Fund.

■ SB 3032 (Signed by Governor on 4/26/11) is the FY 2012 appropriation bill for IHL – General Support. This bill provides funding for the eight universities, including the Ayers settlement funding. The FY 2012 level of funding is $6,047,135, or 1.64%, below the FY 2011 level of funding. There is new language in this bill this year that states that no funds appropriated shall be used for research in which a human embryo is destroyed.

■ SB 3034 (Signed by Governor on 4/26/11) is the Student Financial Aid appropriation bill for FY 2012. This budget provides a continuation level of funding at 0.14%, or $37,012, below the FY 2011 level.

■ SB 3041 (Signed by Governor on 4/26/11) is the appropriation bill for the community and junior colleges. Since the Governor vetoed SB 3042 earlier in the session, this bill contains both the administrative and support budgets for the community colleges. Community and junior colleges are provided level funding from FY 2011, including the replacement of $9.8 million in discretionary ARRA stimulus funding that the Governor provided during the current fiscal year.
2011 UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Jason Camp  
Mississippi State University

Rachel Earnheart  
Belhaven University

Tania Jordan  
William Carey University

Katrina Leflore  
Mississippi Valley State University

Lisa Lucas  
University of Southern Mississippi

Teresa Pongetti  
Delta State University

Amanda Patterson  
Smiley University of Mississippi

Jessica Bailey  
Walker Blue Mountain College

Lindsay Webre  
Millsaps College

MPE congratulates the recipients of the 2011 Undergraduate Scholarship Award. Each student member was awarded a check in the amount of $500.

Jordan Young  
Mississippi College
As the school year comes to a close, please accept my gratitude for all of your hard work and dedication. As teachers and administrators, you are truly the ones who are making a difference in the lives of the students in our state. It is only with your commitment and support we are able to provide our students a world-class education that will give them the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in life.

Legislative Update
It is hard to believe the 2011 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature is behind us. As you can imagine, there was much discussion and attention related to K-12 funding. We are pleased that during this tough economic climate, our elected officials were able to reach an agreement on a budget that will provide the opportunity for a quality education for all students in Mississippi.

Also during the session, House Bill 641 was passed into law. This bill provides specific grounds for revocation or suspension of a teacher’s or administrator’s license for sexual misconduct and requires local Superintendents to report to MDE unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship. This bill supports the Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct that must be signed by all educators in Mississippi Public Schools as part of their contractual agreement. The Code of Ethics will set clear guidelines for educators and will protect the health, safety and general welfare of both students and educators.

Common Core
Training sessions for Common Core State Standards are underway throughout our state. If you have not yet heard about Common Core, let me share some basic concepts with you. The program was launched by parents, teachers, school leaders and experts, along with state leaders, through the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Common Core is not a federal program, but rather a state-led initiative. It will ensure that all students, no matter where they live, have internationally benchmarked standards and assessments that are clear, understandable and consistent.

Deputy State Superintendent Dr. Lynn House and her team have provided general training on this topic to more than 2,000 educators in Mississippi. Over the next several months, more in-depth training on Common Core State Standards will be conducted. The next training sessions on Common Core State Standards and Assessments will be held in six different locations and will provide two days of presentation and discussion focusing on grades K-12. Also this summer, training sessions that focus specifically on grades K - 2 will be held in three locations across Mississippi. These K - 2 sessions will provide training for district representatives who will be expected to return to their districts and train other personnel.

State Board Evaluation System
Over the next several months you will be hearing more about the State Board Examination System. This system is intended to revamp the current traditional high school model by creating more options for students and allow them to set their own course of action based on decisions they make with their parents. One advantage of the State Board Examination System is that it allows students to move on to college courses when ready. At the same time, it enables students who may want to enter a career technical program to do so while earning their high school diploma. A few school districts in Mississippi have agreed to participate in a State Board Examination Model pilot program in the upcoming school year. At the end of the pilot program we will work with national organizations to evaluate its success. I will continue to keep you updated on this important initiative that I hope will give students options that are geared toward their individual goals.

In closing, let me again thank you for all you do to provide a high quality education to the students of Mississippi. My hope is that you have a safe and enjoyable summer.
MPE is proud to congratulate and honor the following members who were recognized in April by the Mississippi Economic Council as STAR (Student-Teacher Achievement Recognition) Teachers. 38 of the 247 (15%) teachers recognized this year are MPE members.

**MPE Member**  
Martha Abadie, Petal High School  
Mona M. Adams, Bayou Academy  
Richard C. Adkins, Wayne Academy  
Karen Balcer, East Central High School  
Chad D. Bond, Newton County High School  
Gloria E. Bratton, Long Beach High School  
Angelia B. Brown, Raymond High School  
Claudia R. Carter, MS School for Math & Science  
Larry W. Chavis, Mendenhall High School  
Andrea P. Clark, Oak Grove High School  
Jan S. DeLaughter, Loyd Star High School  
Rona R. Eckles, Hernando High School  
Charles R. Floyd, Strayhorn High School  
Erin T. Fortenberry, North Pike High School  
Leslie B. Gammill, South Panola High School  
Penny P. Hartley, Copiah Academy  
Shauna R. Hedgepeth, Oak Grove High School  
Doug Holland, Wheeler High School  
Dena K. Holley, Okolona High School

**MPE Member**  
Beth C. Holloman, Caledonia High School  
Dr. Sandra F. Jackson, Mantachie High School  
Vicki H. King, West Lincoln High School  
Melinda T. Kopp, Houlka High School  
Marla D. Marshall, New Site High School  
Lisa W. May, Terry High School  
Brandi N. O’Neal, West Marion High School  
Pamela L. Opel, Gulfport High School  
Linda W. Powe, Pearl High School  
Dennis W. Reed, MS School for Math & Science  
Shonna H. Ryals, Kosciusko High School  
April C. Scarbrough, Greene County High School  
Tasha S. Scott, Bogue Chitto School  
Ann P. Shoemake, Oak Grove High School  
Janie B. Thrasher, Belmont High School  
Sarah R. Todd, Pontotoc High School  
Kathy H. True, Water Valley High School  
Jason D. Varnon, North Pontotoc High School  
Jennifer C. Wilson, Northwest Rankin High School
these programs have the potential to make an impact on the state by evolving our educational system.

Dual enrollment is one of the more popular programs offered by our community colleges, universities, and high schools. Eligible high school students are able to take college classes for credit. In Fall 2009, nearly 2,000 high school students were able to get a head start on their college course work by taking classes from a community college. In the past, there has been some confusion about requirements for people to participate. As a result, S.B. 2869 clarifies any questions about the requirements for these students. This bill will help make the dual enrollment program even better.

I hope that by the time you receive this edition of the MPE Journal, the Legislature will have concluded its 2011 session. I would like to take a moment to mention some of the bills that were passed which pertain to our community colleges.

The community college system has been appropriated $226,361,308 in state funds for FY 2012. This is level funding compared to FY 2011. Additionally, the colleges will divide $25 million in bond money for capital projects. We are very grateful that the Legislature and Governor Barbour were able to provide level funding to our colleges along with money for campus facilities. This is a wise investment for the state that will reap many benefits as we educate our citizens.

On July 1, 2011, the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges’ name will change to “Mississippi Community College Board.” This name is a reflection of the nationwide shift from the old term “junior college” to “community college”. All of our colleges, including Jones County Junior College, the lone “junior college” in the state, were supportive of the change. This was done through H.B. 542.

During the 2010 legislative session, an Education Achievement Council was created with the goal of increasing educational attainment of the state’s working-age population by 2025. This year, H.B. 875 calls on the Council to research and develop a new funding mechanism for community colleges and universities based on productivity goals and accomplishments as well as enrollment. The report is due to the Legislature on November 1, 2012.

H.B. 1163 requires the State Superintendent of Education, the Commissioner of Higher Education, and the Executive Director of the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges to develop a comprehensive report and recommendations to the 2012 Legislature on the implementation and operations of “Early College High Schools.” The report shall be submitted by January 2, 2012. In addition to a report on Early College High Schools, the group is also charged with studying and developing a comprehensive report and recommendations to the 2012 Legislature on the implementation, expansion, and costs associated with the establishment of an Adult High School Diploma. Both of these programs have the potential to make an impact on the state by evolving our educational system.

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With the school year winding down and summer beginning, I thank all of our teachers for the job you do. It takes a special person to accept the calling and to become a great teacher. You are appreciated!
Mississippi’s public universities continue the course of excellence by providing a high quality education to thousands of students, along with service and outreach that touch the lives of all Mississippians. Even in challenging economic times, when resources are limited, our universities are working hard to help students stay the course and graduate, giving them limitless opportunities for success.

With tremendous hard work and a spirit of compromise, the members of the Mississippi House of Representatives and Senate reached an agreement on the FY 2012 budget that cut universities by less than two percent. Understanding the national recession and in anticipation of reduced state revenues, our universities built business plans two years ago that will allow them to manage within the proposed budget.

Certainly, these are challenging times. Times like these call for the most adept of leaders. I am pleased that Alcorn State University and Jackson State University have the benefit of two outstanding leaders. Named by the Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning last December, Dr. Christopher Brown serves as president of Alcorn State University and Dr. Carolyn Meyers serves as president of Jackson State University.

Prior to beginning his tenure at Alcorn, Dr. Brown served as Executive Vice President and Provost of Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn. He has also served as Dean of the College of Education at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. Dr. Brown received a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from South Carolina State University and a master’s degree in educational policy and evaluation from the University of Kentucky. He holds a doctorate in higher education from The Pennsylvania State University with a cognate in public administration and political science.

Dr. Carolyn Meyers comes to Jackson State with over 30 years of experience in higher education, serving most recently as president of Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Va. Prior to this position, Dr. Meyers served as Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Dr. Meyers holds a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from Howard University in Washington, D.C., a master’s degree in mechanical engineering from the George W. Woodruff School of Mechanical Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. In addition, Dr. Meyers earned a doctorate from the Georgia Institute of Technology’s School of Chemical Engineering.

Next, the Board of Trustees will select a leader for the Mississippi University for Women. We are currently seeking nominations for members of the Campus Search Advisory Committee, with representatives from all stakeholders groups, including alumni, students, faculty, staff and the community. The deadline for recommendations for members of the Campus Search Advisory Committee is June 3, 2011. Nominations may be submitted via email at muwsearch@mississippi.edu or by mailing a letter of recommendation to ATTN: MUW Campus Search Advisory Committee, Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning, 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211. The search is expected to conclude with the naming of the president by the end of the year.

Fiscal issues are just one challenge that our university leaders face. Another important issue is that of accessibility. The Board of Trustees recently passed a policy delineating a Required College Preparatory Curriculum and a Recommended College Preparatory Curriculum. The Required CPC increases access for students
to pursue post-secondary education and represents the minimum number of courses that students must pass in high school to be admitted into our state universities.

There is also a Recommended CPC, which requires a higher number of Carnegie units than the Required CPC and gives students a stronger foundation of preparation to meet the additional academic challenges of college. By increasing the opportunities for students to pursue a college education, we will increase the number of students enrolled in post-secondary education, which will benefit both our students and our state.

Mississippi’s public universities are a collective, powerful and unmatched resource for advancing Mississippi. Our graduates return nearly five times Mississippi’s financial investment in income and sales tax. Our graduates are more likely to volunteer, vote and raise healthier and better-educated children. Our universities conduct research and spur innovation that encourages and supports economic growth and opportunities to benefit all Mississippians. We must continue the course of excellence so that our state and its citizens can flourish and thrive in the coming years, decades and centuries.

Newton County School District MPE Members Honor School Board Members

For more than twenty years it has been the practice of the Newton County School District MPE members to host a dinner for their school board members. The Newton County School Board has always been willing to give consideration to the needs and concerns presented by the district’s MPE members. This year the dinner was held during School Board Appreciation Week on February 14. Superintendent Pat Ross, who is also a member of MPE, said the following about the event: “The School Board and I enjoyed a great meal, as well as the opportunity to visit with the Newton County Elementary School MPE members. We realize what a vital role MPE plays in the professional lives of teachers all over Mississippi and appreciate the level of commitment MPE shows to the teaching profession every year.”

 MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Comerford and Brennan Receive 2011 Leo W. Seal Teacher Recognition Award

Anja Comerford and Lori Brennan were among five South Mississippi teachers recognized on April 13 as recipients of the 2011 Leo W. Seal Teacher Recognition Awards from Hancock Bank. A member of MPE since 2007, Comerford is a Gifted Education teacher at Magnolia Park Elementary in Ocean Springs. Brennan teaches English at Ocean Springs High School and has been a member of MPE since 2006.

The awards were established in 1994 and are funded by Hancock Bank and managed by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation. The awards recognize teaching excellence, pay for innovative classroom instruction and commemorate the contributions of the late Leo W. Seal Sr. and Leo W. Seal Jr. to education and economic growth in South Mississippi. The award winners were selected from hundreds of nominees in Harrison, Hancock, Jackson, Pearl River, Jefferson Davis, Lamar and Forrest counties. Each winner receives a $1,500 grant award from Hancock Bank to sponsor classroom projects and a pewter apple award.
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MPE is Mississippi’s largest and premier organization for professional educators. Please help us “get the word out” about our exceptional benefits and the fact that MPE offers its members twice the amount of professional liability protection for a third of the cost of other organizations. MPE’s recruitment incentives provide a great way for you to earn a free membership, as well as a little extra money. You earn a free year’s membership for simply recruiting five new members and you earn money for each new member recruited after five.

- 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
WHY MPE?

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>2010 - 2011 DUES</th>
<th>MPE</th>
<th>OTHER ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professional with liability insurance</td>
<td>$120</td>
<td>$417* - $474*</td>
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<td>Retired Educator without insurance</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$12* - $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)
- Up to $10,000 for legal assistance related to employment or professional matters
- $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.