

2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



THE MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS BELIEVES OUR PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS, STAFF AND STUDENTS DESERVE MORE

On behalf of our over 7,500 members, their students, families, and communities, the Mississippi Association of Educators asks the 2022 Legislature to adopt our recommendations to strengthen and secure our public schools.

INCREASE TEACHER AND SUPPORT STAFF SALARIES

- Establish \$45,000 starting salary for classroom educators through a progressive plan
- Recalibrate salary schedule and secure pay raise that will enable Mississippi teachers' salaries to be above the Southeastern regional average
- Secure a living wage of at least \$15 per hour for Education Support Professionals and school staff

Mississippi's teacher shortage is at crisis level, and providing adequate and reasonable salaries to educators will help fill the need for professional educators and support staff in every classroom in Mississippi.

ESTABLISH UNIVERSAL PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN FOR ALL

- Establish pre-k and kindergarten programs for every early education student in the state
- Include pre-k and kindergarten students in ADA counts

We believe, and studies have shown, that early childhood development and learning gives children the solid foundation they need to reach their highest potential.

GOAL THREE — ENSURE THAT EDUCATOR VOICES GUIDE DECISION-MAKING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Work with elected officials to secure input and testimony from educators currently in the classroom and veteran educators with valuable experience during the decision-making process at the local and state levels.

GOAL FOUR — IMPLEMENT THE MISSISSIPPI ADEQUATE EDUCATION PROGRAM (MAEP)

Begin implementing the current statutory plan that ensures every student has the opportunity to receive a high-quality education and every educator has the resources to provide it.

Our students deserve a quality education, and educators deserve the resources needed to provide a quality education for our students.



REDIRECT MISSISSIPPI'S ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM FROM TESTING TO LEARNING

Create a more holistic accountability system for assessing student success and areas of improvement for Mississippi's public schools.

Educators, students, and families consistently report that the current high stakes testing approach of accountability measures is harmful. Educators are being forced to teach to the test, and students feel the weight of the expectations set forth by their schools and districts. Our members believe that a more comprehensive learning approach is warranted as we seek to provide students with the public education they need and deserve.

SET STATEWIDE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING PRACTICES STANDARDS

Support school staff in receiving social emotional learning training on a continuing basis. Require districts to develop trauma-informed practices plans that prioritize a whole-child approach in and out of the classroom.

Approximately 45% of children nationally have experienced at least one adverse childhood experience (ACE) – more commonly known as *trauma*. ACEs include physical and emotional abuse as well as issues such as bullying, homelessness, and income insecurity. Currently, there are no standardized supports provided for Mississippi students who experience trauma.

ESTABLISH COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

- Secure funding to support innovative learning collaboratives to include families and community members and leaders.
- Provide wraparound services in areas of the state most in need of these additional supports for their students

A community school is the center of the community – open all day, every day, to everyone – that brings together academics, health and social services, youth and community development and community engagement under one roof, leading to improved learning, stronger families, and healthier communities.

ENSURE CONTRACT SECURITY FOR CERTIFIED AND NON-CERTIFIED CLASSROOM PERSONNEL

- Establish unified criterion for teacher contract renewal
- Provide due process for teachers based upon years of service (i.e. 5 years, 10 years, etc.)
- Provide an employment contract for non-certified classroom personnel

Veteran teachers deserve a more respectful and secure contract renewal process based on their years of service in the classroom. Assistant teachers are under accountability standards, just like certified classroom personnel who enjoy working under contract. Assistant teachers deserve the due process rights that come with a contract.

OFFER COMMUNITY COLLEGE INSTRUCTORS SALARIES SUITABLE FOR THEIR POSITIONS

Raise community college salaries to the averaged K-12 and IHL salaries Recruiting and retaining quality, professional teachers is necessary for community college students to achieve their fullest potential. Salaries for these instructors must be comparable to community colleges in surrounding states.

WHO WE ARE

The Mississippi Association of Educators is the oldest professional education association in Mississippi.

We represent educators in every aspect of Mississippi public education from kindergarten to community colleges.

Our membership is the most diverse of any education organization in the state.

We represent over 7,500 individuals whose professional lives are dedicated to providing the best possible education for Mississippi's public school students.



2022 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS

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