

From: MDE Communications <MDECommunications@mdek12.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 5:07 PM
Subject: [edupdate] MDE COVID-19 Guidance to Districts as of May 7, 2020

REQUIRED ACTIONS FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

DUE MAY 14: Digital Access Surveys for Families and School Employees

As school closures continue and as the state develops plans to direct resources to the areas of greatest need, the MDE has prepared two brief surveys for districts to circulate:...

DUE MAY 15: Learning-at-Home and Summer Enrichment Plan

We appreciate the time you took in early April to respond to the initial request from the MDE regarding current efforts to support students who are learning at home. In...

Graduation Ceremony Guidance

Graduation ceremonies for the Class of 2020 must follow safety guidelines from the Mississippi State Department of Health and the CDC. Considerations include:

- Limiting spectator attendance
- For larger schools, grouping graduates or providing individual ceremonies over several days
- Providing a livestream or broadcast of graduation by videoing individual students
- Following social distancing between families
- Consulting with your local health department to address local community concerns

Licensure Call Center Alert

To maintain the safety of MDE staff and to better serve education stakeholders, the Educator Licensure Call Center will reopen on an abbreviated schedule with a limited number of staff to respond to licensure needs. Beginning May 12, 2020, the Educator Licensure Call Center will be open every Tuesday and Thursday between the hours 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. until further notice. You may reach a licensure team member at 601-359-3483.

Due to the anticipated high volume of calls, we encourage you to continue visit the Educator Licensure section of mdek12.org/covid19 and mdek12.org/licensure before calling the office or emailing questions to the teachersupport@mdek12.org email address. Answers to most questions we receive are addressed on those webpages.

Brigance Screener III

Beginning August 2020, each local school district must administer the Comprehensive Early Learning Observational Assessment, **Brigance Screener III**, to every public pre-kindergarten student. The Screener will be administered twice per year. Screening must be completed by October 1st and in May before school ends. Students that indicate areas of deficiency on the developmental screener should be provided targeted interventions to remediate the deficiency and progress monitoring should be documented by the classroom teacher. For further information, please reference the [Early Learning Guidelines for Classrooms Serving Three- and Four- Year Old Children- Guidelines for Assessment: Requirements for Assessment and Screening](#).

The administrator of each pre-kindergarten program for their district must complete the [Brigance Training Webinar](#) on our website. The online webinar will take approximately forty-five (45) minutes to complete and will include the following information: preparing to

screen, administering and scoring a screener, interpreting screening results, identifying next steps, and an overview of the online management system.

Upon completion of the webinar, administrators must complete the [Assurances Form](#) and email to earlychildhood@mdek12.org.

Make sure to note on the assurances if your district does not have access to a Brigance Screen III Kit for pre-kindergarten or the Brigance Online Management System (BOMS). The Mississippi Department of Education will provide access to BOMS for all school districts and will review the results of the data submitted. If you have any questions concerning this procedure, please email jgreer@mdek12.org.

MDE Early Childhood Specialized Training

This training is offered to teachers that need to acquire twelve hours of approved early childhood coursework to teach in pre-k classrooms. The completion of this training program will be the equivalent of twelve hours of course work needed for teachers and assistants of pre-k classrooms, general education and special education, lacking an emphasis in early childhood.

Completion of this training program includes:

- one-day onboarding training (July 2020)
- two on-line courses (beginning August 2020)
- submission of all assignments to receive certification
- and a two-week face-to-face training at one of our six locations across the state (Jackson, Hattiesburg, Indianola, Columbus, Brookhaven, and Oxford, June 14-25, 2021, excluding the weekend)

The face-to-face components of bootcamp training will also meet the requirements of professional development for administrators of pre-k classrooms. Typically the face-to-face component is offered first, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic MDE is reversing the order of the program.

Please reference the [graphic](#) on the early childhood web page to help determine if you should attend the Specialized Early Childhood Training Bootcamp.

Registration: Additional information regarding registration will be coming soon. Registration will be handled through North MS Education Consortium (www.northmsec.com). Participants will be required to create an account, provide a valid email address that is checked on a regular basis, and select one of the six sites for the two-week face-to-face training that you will be attending.

Teacher Certification and Teacher Assistant Qualification Policy Update

On April 16, the Mississippi Board of Education passed a waiver for the following rule in the *Early Learning Guidelines for Classrooms Serving Three-and Four-Year Old Children* due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

By August 1, 2021, 50% of teachers in each district will meet the requirements described below. By August 1, 2023, 100% of regular education pre-kindergarten teachers in each district will meet the requirements described on page 16 of the [Guidelines](#).

Special Education pre-kindergarten teacher requirements are newly announced within the Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Classrooms Serving Three- and Four Year-Old

Children, therefore; 50% of Special Education classroom teachers must meet this requirement by August 1, 2021, and 100% of Special Education classroom teachers must meet this requirement by August 1, 2023. This guidance can be found on page 17 of the [Guidelines](#).

The pre-kindergarten assistant teacher qualifications will change effective August 1, 2021. By August 1, 2021, 50% of assistant teachers in each district will meet the requirements described below. By August 1, 2023, 100% of assistant teachers in each district will meet the requirements described on page 18 of the [Guidelines](#).

(If you are a teacher or assistant in an Early Learning Collaborative, your requirements are different from the ones listed in this section.)

Mississippi Early Childhood Association Conference

The Early Childhood Education Conference that occurs in July has been cancelled. As an option for teachers and administrators of pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms the Office of Early Childhood is partnering with the Mississippi Early Childhood Association to offer pre-conference and conference sessions. The Office of Early Childhood plans to have staff presenting sessions on infants and toddlers, pre-k and school age children at the Mississippi Early Childhood Association Conference October 14 – 16 in Starkville at the Mill. Registration for the conference can be found at the [MsECA website](#) soon.

REACH MS Introduction to MTSS-PBIS Tier 1 Overview Webinar

Join us Monday May 18, 2020 as we provide an introduction to the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework at the Tier 1 level. The live webinar will provide a brief overview of the critical elements necessary to implement PBIS with fidelity and how successful implementation impacts overall school climate and outcomes for students. [Register here](#).

Summer Learning Path: Academic Response to COVID-19 for PreK Children

[Waterford UPSTART is a school-readiness program](#) that teaches preschool-aged children the skills they need to be ready for school, including basic reading, math, science, and social-emotional learning. In response to the educational interruptions caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, we've arranged to offer free summer access to our award-winning school readiness program in select states: Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Indiana, **Mississippi**, New Mexico, Ohio, and Texas.

Student Engagement, Grant Funding, and Virtual Professional Development - Hanover Research

District planning for the upcoming year will present new challenges for superintendents and administrators. Parents and students are trying to make sure that schools will be safe before returning to the classroom. Teachers and staff will be interested in how best to engage those students more adversely affected by the health crisis and what steps can be taken to increase engagement and stem summer learning loss. Hanover continues to support our 300+ members with access to best practice research and customizable surveys and data analysis to tackle the most pressing questions that have emerged from this pandemic. A summary of recent research, grant funding opportunities, and networking support can be found below.

Latest Research & Analysis

- [Learning Loss Discussion Guide](#)
- [Strategies for Engaging Students during Remote Learning](#)
- [Best Practices in Meaningful Distance Learning for English Learners](#)

- [Frequently Asked Questions: Crisis Management](#)

Grant Funding Opportunities

Hanover is closely monitoring federal budget developments surrounding COVID-19 and how it may impact the K-12 education community. [This summary](#) outlines the projected grant competitions of interest to districts and other K-12 organizations from May to July 2020. In addition to relevant information about each award, the summary includes the following:

- Projected submission deadlines (subject to change upon release of funding announcements)
- Approximate support deadlines for new clients to enlist Hanover's proposal development services for each corresponding funding announcement:
 - Full proposal production - Foundation: 5-7 weeks; Federal: 8-10 weeks;
 - Revision and resubmission consulting - Foundation: 4-6 weeks; Federal: 6-8 weeks; and
 - Proposal Review - Foundation: 2-3 weeks; Federal: 3-4 weeks.

To download a PDF version of this grid, which includes quick links to competition websites, [click here](#).

Research & Networking Support

- [Virtual Professional Development](#) – Hanover's new online professional learning platform, Educator Learning Center (ELC), equips districts with sustained and interactive professional learning for remote teachers. Our current course material includes four priority areas – social-emotional learning, culturally-responsive teaching, instruction design, and multi-tiered systems of support.
- [Climate Pulse Survey](#) – Our research staff has developed a survey instrument that enables district leaders to assess their services and support on a regular basis so they can adjust what they are doing to meet their stakeholders' needs.
- [Weekly Superintendents Leadership Council](#) – Hanover hosts a weekly virtual forum every Thursday evening at 8pm ET, to provide an opportunity for superintendents and district leaders to gather, ask questions, and share solutions. This week's session will be run in collaboration with the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA), the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), and the Michigan Association of School Administrators (MASA). [Register here](#) to learn how your peers are navigating change.

Educators need data and information to inform financial and academic decisions now more than ever. Please [contact us](#) for any questions that are arising with your community, board, parents, teachers, or students, as you plan for the year ahead.

Do You Have Questions for MDE?

Please check the [MDE COVID-19 Information](#) webpage **before** emailing your questions to MDE staff. The answers to most of the questions we receive are addressed on the webpage. We also regularly add guidance, **answers to new questions** and links to our daily update email on this webpage. Daily updates are posted in the [Administrator News](#) section of the [EdUpdate](#).