

For Immediate Release: Thursday, July 23, 2020 Contact: Leah Rupp Smith, Deputy Chief of Staff lsmith@senate.ms.gov / (769) 232-1481

Lifelong Teacher Selected as Lt. Governor's Charter School Board Appointee

Brookhaven, Miss.—A 30-year veteran educator in Mississippi schools has been confirmed as the newest member of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board.

Jennifer Jackson Whittier of Brookhaven, appointee of Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann, will serve a two-year term ending in June 2022. She received the unanimous consent of the Mississippi Senate.

The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board includes seven members from across the State, with three appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, one from each Supreme Court District. The Board oversees the State's seven authorized charter schools, approves applications for new schools, and determines whether underperforming schools should close, among other responsibilities. Charter schools in Mississippi are public schools open to all students which operate with flexibility in areas like curriculum and schedules.

"Jennifer has been an encouragement to thousands of children in her more than three decade tenure as a teacher in classrooms in northeast and southwest Mississippi," Hosemann said. "She personally knows what it takes for our schools and students to succeed, and I know she will be an asset to this important Board."

Whittier served as a teacher in the Aberdeen, Brookhaven, and Lincoln County public school districts. After retirement, she also taught at Parkland and Brookhaven Academies. Whittier taught English, Spanish, creative writing, and public speaking. Among other honors, she was selected as her district's Teacher of the Year three times and a STAR teacher six times. She is a former feature writer for *Bluffs & Bayous* magazine.

Whittier earned her bachelor's degree in Secondary Education from Mississippi State University. Married to Greg Whittier, she is the mother of Lindsey Mayes and Carly Shandy, and grandmother to Madison, Colton, and Connor.

"I am honored to be a part of this Board and will strive to serve the state of Mississippi with integrity. My hope is to be able to reach out to meet the educational needs of all Mississippi students," Whittier said.

For more information about the Charter School Authorizer Board,

visit <u>www.charterschoolboard.ms.gov</u>. For more information on Lieutenant Governor Delbert Hosemann visit <u>www.ltgovhosemann.ms.gov</u>.