Mississippi State Board of Education Suspends Policies on A-F Grading, Passing Requirements for 3rd Grade Reading and High School Assessments for 2020-21 School Year

NEWS RELEASE

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JACKSON, Miss. – The Mississippi State Board of Education (SBE) voted today to suspend three statewide policies regarding assessment and accountability to manage the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on the 2020-21 school year.

All required state and federal assessments will be administered this school year as usual. However, the policy suspensions mean schools and districts will not be assigned A-F letter grades for their performance during the 2020-21 school year, 3rd graders do not have to pass a reading test to qualify for promotion, and high school students do not have to pass end-of-course assessments to meet graduation requirements.

Below is a summary of the key statewide policy suspensions enacted today. View the SBE meeting back-up material on the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) website for full details and additional policy suspensions for the 2020-21 school year.

- **3rd Graders**
  Current 3rd graders will take the 3rd Grade Reading/Language Arts assessment. Students are not required to meet a passing score on the assessment to be promoted to 4th grade for the 2021-22 school year. Students still must meet all other district requirements for promotion.

- **High School Students**
  All eligible students who take required end-of-course high school assessments including Algebra I, English II, Biology and U.S. History in the 2020-21 school year are not required to meet a passing score to meet high school graduation requirements. Students must meet all other state and district requirements to graduate.

- **A-F Accountability Grades for Schools and Districts**
  Schools and districts will not be assigned A-F letter grades for their performance in the 2020-21 school year because the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) will not have sufficient data to calculate grades based on state and federal requirements. Schools and districts will retain their most recent letter grades earned in the 2018-19 school year.

The MDE will calculate and report the results of all statewide assessments administered during the 2020-21 school year and will submit information and a waiver request to the U.S. Department of Education to meet federal requirements for assessment and accountability.

“This year’s statewide assessments will provide valuable information about the impact of COVID-19 on learning and will help identify where accelerated learning opportunities for students are most needed,” said Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education. “The policy suspensions are intended to support schools through this intensely challenging year for educators and students.”

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