

National Center for Teacher Residencies, Mississippi to develop first state-operated teacher residency

The National Center for Teacher Residencies has received a \$649,366 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to support the Mississippi Department of Education in the development of the nation's first state-run teacher residency.

The grant will also fund strategies to better recruit and retain African-American male teachers and provide support to teachers pursuing National Board Certification.

Mississippi Teacher Residency will be the first of its kind in the nation. The Mississippi Department of Education will oversee the program's development and will operate the residency when it is fully functional.

The Mississippi Department of Education is in the process of interviewing prospective residents for the Mississippi Teacher Residency. More than 300 people applied. Decisions will be announced on May 1, 2019.

"The Mississippi Teacher

Residency is a unique opportunity to build a state-led teacher residency with partners who are focused on developing high-quality teachers for students who need them most," said Anissa Listak, NCTR's founder and CEO. "States are increasingly recognizing the residency model as an effective way to address teacher shortages and to develop effective, committed educators for underserved communities."

Since its founding in 2007,

NCTR has helped launch more than 35 teacher residency programs that are delivering diverse and talented teachers for high-need schools and classrooms in 18 states. NCTR's residency model pairs promising new teachers with trained mentor teachers and coaches for year-long apprenticeships in real classrooms.

Coupled with college coursework, this training better prepares teachers to help students succeed, from their very first day as new teachers.

Research also shows that residency graduates teach in their

high-need schools longer. More than 80 percent of teachers trained in NCTR partner programs continue to teach in their high-need schools three years after being hired.

"When we looked at the data on teacher retention among teachers trained in residencies, we immediately saw residencies as a strategic way to provide teacher candidates with high-quality training and keep those teachers in classrooms — something we need in Mississippi," said Dr. Carey Wright, Mississippi State Superintendent of Education.

The project calls for 35 residents to be trained during the 2019-20 school year, and another 35 the following school year. The residency will be free for those selected into the program, and it will provide residents with stipends during the residency year.

Upon completion of the program, residents will receive a master's degree and a job in one of the program's partner school districts.

For more information on NCTR and teacher residency programs, please visit www.nc-tresidencies.org.

CHANGE: Our Children Deserve It!

By the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools

As the first school year of the Holmes County Consolidated School District (HCCSD) nears its close, my executive team and I are committed to keeping our promise to bring the HCCSD into the 21st century with high quality programs, initiatives, teaching and learning strategies, technology, innovative schools, certified staff, and opportunities to grow and learn in a global community. The Board of Education has assured us that they share our commitment.

When we embarked upon a new era in Holmes County education on July 1, 2018, we knew that it was time for a change, and that some changes would come with cost and sacrifice for the betterment of children. For humans, change is the most taxing process that we experience in our lives. Change can feel disruptive, invasive, and extremely uncomfortable. Change challenges us to grow and to step out of our comfort zone to reach our highest potential. Change dares us to let go of the past to embrace the future with open arms and a willing spirit.

We acknowledge that this past year has been very difficult in our district. We were asked to change to meet the demands of higher levels of accountability as a consolidated school district addressing our rating of F. Meeting the expectation to change was hard for all of us. However, in an unprecedented way we worked together to lead and execute a seamless Holmes—Durant Consolidation, as mandated under state law.

We continue to let go of stagnating holds on the past, embrace needed changes, and connect for the success of—and opportunities for—our children. Fears, uncertainties, misinformation, even expressions of negativity and resistance to change are slowly but surely evolving into some welcome rays of hope, excitement, and great expectations, especially among many of our students. They are enthusiastically excelling.

It is simply that time. Our It's That Time! theme was not merely a chant or cheer; it was not a feel-good term. It represents the spirit and core of who we are: a rural, but rapidly-growing school district with a vision and mission to go higher and higher. In fact, our Strategic Plan carries the name, It's That Time! As we continue to grow, it is always going to be a time to do even better.

I whole-heartedly believe that working in tandem with all stakeholders is the most effective practice. However, in a school system, that practice must always be student-centered. Many of you have heard me say time after time, that if you set the standards high, students will rise and do their best to achieve them; that has happened repeatedly throughout the school year.

Our dedicated teachers and eager-to-learn students are gaining by leaps and bounds: not only on

the fields and courts but also in the academic arena. How many rural school districts, as small as HCCSD, can boast 55 straight-A inductees into the National Honor Society (NHS)? The Holmes County Central High School NHS chapter is the county school system's first.

Borrowing a little bit from Shakespeare, let me count the ways and outcomes of our impressive 2018-2019 year:

1. Board of Education and Superintendent working in tandem.
2. Developed and executing the It's That Time! Strategic Plan 2019-2022 with Key Performance Indicators to measure progress of the plan.
3. Focused on improving graduation rates and student outcomes across the board.
4. Generated a cost savings of \$1.5M in a reorganization of the newly developed consolidated district.
5. Published Compensation Manual to manage compensation and benefits philosophy.
6. Published Staffing Formula Manual to equitably allocate staff to schools.
7. Trained educators to integrate Restorative Practice and to execute its already-instituted Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) with increased fidelity.
8. Eliminated corporal punishment from the discipline plan—a change which made national headlines.
9. Won a competitive three-year \$700,000 21st Century Grant for after-school and summer arts integration programming.
10. Launched a new, user-friendly, Holmesccsd.org website providing district information and updates.
11. Established direct link for parents to reach out to the Superintendent directly from the district website
12. Established social media

platform accounts for the district to provide two-way communication mechanisms for all stakeholders.

13. Increased cameras on the buses for more safety and to help deter bullying.

14. Implemented a Student Advisory Council of grades 9-12 students to advise the Superintendent on issues from the students' perspective.

15. Designed and opened the Graduates Within Reach Academy, an intensive credit-recovery online-learning program.

16. Adopted curricular resources for Social Studies 3-12 and Math K-12.

17. Adopted new Science textbooks in grades 3– 12.

18. Developed a PreK–12 Literacy Framework.

19. Provided intensive professional development for HS ELA teachers

20. Established Pre-K Promise Instructional Council.

21. Opening Pre-K classrooms in each elementary school 2019-2020.

22. Consistently measured performance in Reading and Math through Universal Screener.

23. Established Pacing Guides in all grades and subject content areas.

24. Purchased Build Your Own Curriculum to streamline district curriculum.

25. Implementing Reading Mastery and Corrective Reading (Summer 2019)

26. Expanded Gifted Education to 8th grade.

27. Delivered over 125 professional learning opportunities for teachers and leaders (formal and informal)

28. Established Counselors' Professional Learning Community.

29. Implemented online professional development tracking system.

30. Established observation

feedback protocol.

31. Elevated the grading standard: passing grade is 70% to demonstrate mastery of material and maintain eligibility for MIS-SHSAA athletics and activities.

32. Reinstated Honors Courses in middle school.

33. Added an Advanced Placement course to the HS course offerings

34. Opened the Doretha Draine Wiley (DDW) Fine Arts Magnet Academy at Holmes County Central High School (HCCHS) including media studies via an MOU with the Jackson State University Department of Journalism and Media Studies.

35. Created a Human Resources Department.

36. Corrected multiple citations in the 2017-2018 Mississippi Department of Education audit report.

37. Corrected multiple citations in 2017-2018 Federal Programs audit reports.

38. Obtained licenses for 25 teachers.

39. Created a Public Relations Department and expanded the district's media and community outreach.

40. Installed new copiers at all locations at cost savings.

41. Converted to integrated Human Resource and Finance software for improved operations and data collection.

42. New phone system for district to improve communications.

43. Revamped family registration procedures.

44. Hosted 1st Critical Community Conversations.

45. Instituted Summer Flight innovative summer school initiative

46. Established ITT District Monitoring Team

47. 1:1 Computing, includes new laptops for all teachers and administrators

48. Received REACH MS

PBIS technical assistance grant.

49. Applied for more than 10 grants.

The above-mentioned achievements only highlight some of the key successes of our district. One would be amazed at how much our hardworking teachers, students, parents, staff, administration, BOE, and community partners have accomplished this year!

But wait! It's not over. Students and parents will get a FREE opportunity to soar in the Summer Flight Program—not summer school but a non-traditional summer cultural and fun academic experience, featuring field trips and projects for kindergarten through 11th-grade students. In HCCSD, we want to keep the brain power of our children going. Research shows that students tend to experience what is called the Summer Slide—a diminishment of what they learned during the school year. The average third-grader experiences 20 percent reading loss and 27 percent math loss. The average 7th-grader experiences 36 percent reading loss and 50 percent math loss. That is why, through Summer Flight, we will keep them engaged in an enjoyable way. Transportation will be provided.

For many, as the school school-year closes, summer means vacation, which is good, but HCCSD and its supporters will be appealing to the citizens of Holmes County to help keep the little engine that could going to greater heights in education for all of our students and communities. As you know, there is a statewide need for more highly qualified and certified teachers, and Holmes County is certainly no exception as you saw by our aggressive and heart-felt Will You Be My Teacher? campaign.

We are growing, and we have a high school that was built in 1958. It's that time! citizens and voters of Holmes County, for a new, state-of-the-art high school, and it is certainly time for recruiting, retaining and paying better highly qualified, certified and collaborative teachers. You can help keep up the positive achievements and changes by making the 2019-2020 school year and beyond even greater for our students and county with a vote of YES on August 6, 2019 for the Holmes County Consolidated School District Bond Referendum. No, \$16.6 million will not pay for a high school, but it will contribute to the construction of three schools: elementary school on the east side of the county for Durant and Goodman-Pickens, a 9th grade center for the entire county and a high school for the county, Your investment of just 27¢ a day will insure conducive learning environments for all the children of Holmes county.

We, the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools will continue to work in tandem to ensure each student is prepared for college and/or career.



Superintendent and the Board of Education: Left to right rear: James L. Henderson, Ed.D., Superintendent, Elder William Dean, Jr., Anthony Anderson, President, Rayford Horton; Left to right front: April Jones, Secretary, Louise Winters, Vice-President.