

OFFICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
May 17-18, 2007

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC EDUCATION

12. Approval to delete State Board of Education Policy 7604 Implementation of Grades 3 and 7 Benchmarks for the Mississippi Curriculum Test and to revise State Board of Education Policy 4300 Intervention Process
(Has cleared the Administrative Procedures Act process with public comments)

Executive Summary

At the January, 2007 State Board of Education meeting MDE staff presented a plan to delete the Grades 3 and 7 Benchmarks for the Mississippi Curriculum Test policy based on 1) the high passing rate on the benchmarks, 2) the high cost of implementation, and 3) overlap with the Intervention Process policy. Therefore, the MDE is recommending the deletion of the Grades 3 and 7 Benchmarks for the Mississippi Curriculum Test policy and revision of the Intervention Process policy to include automatic referral to the Teacher Support Team when a student scores at the Minimal level on any part of the Mississippi Curriculum Test. The revision to the Intervention Process policy also includes a clarification about the timeline for the Teacher Support Team to implement and monitor interventions.

Back-up material attached

Recommendation: Approval

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| DESCRIPTOR TERM: Grades 3 and 7 Benchmarks for the MCT | CODE: 7604 |
| ADOPTION DATE: July 20, 2001 | REVISION: March 15, 2002 |

STATE BOARD POLICY

Implementation of Grades 3 and 7 Benchmarks for the Mississippi Curriculum Test

Student Intervention and Review Teams

1. ~~Each school may have a Student Intervention Team, comprised of teachers from that school, which will continually evaluate students and make ongoing recommendations about instructional decisions beginning in kindergarten through 8th grade.~~

2. ~~Each school district shall form External School Review Teams that will recommend retention/promotion for a student failing grades 3 and 7 benchmarks, as described below. In order to provide objective reviews, the team members will consist of teachers who do not teach at the school where students are being evaluated. Team members can be from other schools within a school district or from another school district.~~

Timeline and Description of Retention/Promotion Process

~~**Fall**— Score reports from the spring Mississippi Curriculum Test (MCT) are returned in mid July. Students who took the test at the end of 2nd and 6th grades are entering 3rd and 7th grades. At the beginning of the school year, the Student Intervention Team shall assist individual teachers in examining test scores and other data from these students' records in order to identify students who might be at risk of failing to reach the benchmarks established for grades 3 and 7.~~

~~**Spring**— Students take the MCT. Scores are returned in mid July, and pass/fail is determined in each content area.~~

~~**Fall**— Students go on to the 4th or 8th grade (unless they are retained for reasons other than the results of the MCT). The Student Intervention Team may assist teachers in identifying specific areas in which students need instructional intervention and in mapping out strategies for increasing student achievement. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, extended day services, tutoring, compensatory classes, and parent contracts. Eighth grade students may be enrolled in compensatory classes of reading, writing, and mathematics as electives.~~

~~**Winter**— In January, students who failed the test are re-tested in the content area(s) they failed using the 3rd/7th grade MCT.~~

~~**Spring**— Scores are returned. Students who pass are eligible to go on to 5th/0th grades the next school year unless they are retained based on the district promotion/retention policy. Students who do not pass are referred to an External School Review Team. The team, using criteria set forth by the Mississippi Department of Education, will recommend retention or promotion to the school district.~~

~~The district may exempt a student from retention provided:~~

- ~~• there is an abundance of evidence that the student's test scores do not reflect his usual performance; or~~
- ~~• complying with all facets of this policy would have an adverse impact on the student's educational program; or~~
- ~~• other unusual or compelling circumstances exist.~~

~~If a student is exempted from retention, possible educational repercussions are discussed with parents/guardians, specifically including a detailed explanation of the graduation requirement of passing the subject area tests. Parental consent is given.~~

~~**May** Students will take the 4th/8th grade MCT.~~

~~**July** A student who was to be retained based on the recommendation of the External School Review Team may be promoted by the district if the student passes the 4th/8th grade test based on criteria established solely for this purpose.~~

~~**Students with Disabilities**~~

- ~~• The IEP committee will make promotion recommendations for students participating in instructional level testing.~~
- ~~• The IEP committee will make promotion recommendations for students participating in an alternate assessment.~~

~~**Students Absent from Testing**~~

~~Students enrolled in the school but absent during test administration (including make-up testing) for the 3rd and 7th grade MCT~~

- ~~• The External Review Team will use information from other sources to identify students who need remediation. If identified as needing remediation, the student will participate in the re-test during the 4th/8th grade.~~

~~**Students transferring into the school after the administration of the MCT**~~

- ~~• Students entering a Mississippi public school from a public school of another state will not be required to pass the grades 3 and 7 benchmark tests.~~
- ~~• Students entering a Mississippi public school from a private school that is accredited regionally or by the state of Mississippi will not be required to pass the grades 3 and 7 benchmark tests.~~
- ~~• Students entering a Mississippi public school from a non-accredited school will take a grade placement test as required by the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards. Appropriate decisions will be based on the results of the grade placement test.~~

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| DESCRIPTOR TERM: Intervention | CODE: 4300 |
| ADOPTION DATE: January 21, 2005 | REVISION: May 18, 2007 |

STATE BOARD POLICY

Intervention Process

MDE shall require an instructional model designed to meet the needs of every student. The model shall consist of three tiers of instruction.

Tier ~~1~~1: Quality classroom instruction based on MS Curriculum Frameworks

Tier ~~2~~2: Focused supplemental instruction

Tier ~~3~~3: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students

Teachers should use progress monitoring information to (a) determine if students are making adequate progress, (b) identify students as soon as they begin to fall behind, and (c) modify instruction early enough to ensure each and every student gains essential skills. Monitoring of student progress is an ongoing process that may be measured through informal classroom assessment, benchmark assessment instruments and large-scale assessments.

If strategies at Tiers ~~1~~1 and ~~2~~2 are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the Teacher Support Team. The TST is the problem-solving unit responsible for interventions developed at Tier ~~3~~3. Each school must have a Teacher Support Team (TST) implemented in accordance with the process developed by the Mississippi Department of Education. The chairperson of the TST shall be the school principal as the school's instructional leader or the principal's designee. The designee may not be an individual whose primary responsibility is special education. Interventions will be:

- designed to address the deficit areas;
- research based;
- implemented as designed by the TST;
- supported by data regarding the effectiveness of interventions.

After a referral is made, the TST must develop and begin implementation of an intervention(s) within two weeks. No later than eight weeks after implementation of the intervention(s) the TST must conduct a documented review of the interventions to determine success of the intervention. No later than 16 weeks after implementation of the intervention(s), a second review must be conducted to determine whether the intervention is successful. If the intervention(s) is determined to be unsuccessful, then the student will be referred for a comprehensive assessment.

In addition to failure to make adequate progress following Tiers ~~1~~1 and ~~2~~2, students will be referred to the TST for interventions as specified in guidelines developed by MDE if any of the following events occur.

- A. Grades 1-3: A student has failed one (1) grade;
- B. Grades 4-12: A student has failed two (2) grades; ~~OR~~
- C. A student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than twenty (20) days in the current school year; OR
- D. A student scores at the Minimal level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 Mississippi Curriculum Test.

Referrals to the Teacher Support Team must be made within the first twenty (20) school days of a school year if the student ~~failed the preceding year resulting in a referral as~~ meets any of the criteria A-D stated above.