



## Mississippi Department of Education

John W. Jordan, Ed.D., Interim State Superintendent of Education


### Office of Student Performance

### Office of School Improvement

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## MEMORANDUM

To: School Improvement Superintendents

From: Quentin Ransburg,   
Office of Innovative Support

Date: August 7, 2009

Subject: School Improvement Identification

Based on the Preliminary 2009 Accountability Results, you have a school(s) within your district that has been identified as in need of improvement. The process of school improvement requires schools to develop a two-year school improvement plan. The school(s) may develop a new plan or revise an existing one, but in either case, it must be completed no later than 90 days after the school has been identified. In addition to submitting School Improvement Plans, districts are also required to submit revised copies of your Consolidated Federal Programs Application Cover Page, Set-Aside Pages, District Budget Page and School Budget Pages, reflecting the set-aside amount for Supplemental Educational Services (SES), Choice-Transportation, if applicable, and Professional Development.

In accordance with the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*, there are certain sanctions in which identified schools must honor in addition to developing school improvement plans. Year 1 schools must offer parents of eligible schools Public School Choice, the option of transferring their child to an available school within the district that has not been identified as a School Improvement School. Year 2, Corrective Action, and Restructuring Schools must also offer Supplemental Educational Services (SES) to eligible students. Supplemental Educational Services are additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students in schools in need of improvement provided by approved SES Providers. These services may include academic assistance such as tutoring, remediation, and other educational interventions, provided that the selected approach is consistent with the content and instruction used by the local educational agency (LEA) and are aligned with the State's academic content standards. The services provided through SES must be high quality, research-based, and specifically designed to increase student academic achievement, which must be provided outside the normal school day [Section 1116(e)(12)(C)].

Under the terms of *NCLB*, school districts are required to spend an amount equal to 20 percent of their Title I, Part A funds for parental choice options, including Supplemental Educational Services and transportation for students who exercise their Public School Choice option, unless a

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lesser amount is needed to meet all requests. Eligible students are all students from low-income families who attend Title I schools that are in their first year of improvement for Public School Choice and in their second year of school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring for SES. Eligibility is not dependent on whether the student is a member of the subgroup that caused the school to not make AYP or whether the student is in a grade that takes the statewide assessments as required by Section 1111 of the ESEA. However, priority for Choice must be given to low income, low achieving students. If funds are insufficient to provide SES to each eligible student with a parental request, the LEA must give priority to providing services to the lowest achieving eligible students. In this situation, the LEA should use objective criteria to determine the lowest achieving students.

As part of the state's 2008 AYP model amendment request to the U.S. Department of Education, all schools that were definitely being identified as in need of improvement for the upcoming year must notify parents at least 2 weeks prior to the first day of school of their available options (e.g., school choice, supplemental educational services) based on the schools' prior year improvement status. To ensure compliance of this statute, we are requiring districts to attest that they did submit required choice letters to parents 14 days prior to the start of school by completing the attached form and submitting it to our office by August 21, 2009.

If you have any questions or need assistance completing the application, please feel free to contact Aisha McGee or Cathy Travis at 601-359-3499 or via email at [amcgee@mde.k12.ms.us](mailto:amcgee@mde.k12.ms.us) or [cctravis@mde.k12.ms.us](mailto:cctravis@mde.k12.ms.us) .

Attachment

cc: Federal Program Coordinators  
Dr. Laura B. Jones  
Sonya Amis  
Melba Beasley

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