

IN THE CHANCERY COURT OF THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT
OF HINDS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

FILED
JUL 21 2014

GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF
TRUSTEES AND DR. MONTRELL GREENE, IN HIS
OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS SUPERINTENDENT,
ON BEHALF OF GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

EDDIE JEAN CARR, CHANCERY CLERK
BY K. Howard R.C.

PETITIONER

VS.

CAUSE NO.: G2014-1047 w/4

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION;
MISSISSIPPI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION; AND
MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION

RESPONDENT

PETITIONER GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
MOTION FOR TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER AND PRELIMINARY
INJUNCTION WITH NOTICE

The Greenwood School District Board of Trustees and Dr. Montrell Greene, in his official capacity as superintendent, on behalf of the Greenwood School District ("District" or "Petitioner") file this Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction. In support of the Motion, the District sets forth the following facts and law:

FACTS

1. The Mississippi Department of Education ("MDE") auditors conducted an on-site evaluation of the Greenwood Public School District April 29-May 2, 2014 and May 19-20, 2014.

2. The first notice the District had of any findings by the auditors was when the audit report was hand delivered to Dr. Montrell Greene, superintendent, on Wednesday, July 16, 2014 while he was attending the Mississippi Association of School Superintendent's annual meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi. Dr. Greene immediately

departed the coast to travel back to Greenwood. The audit report, attached as **Exhibit A**, contained a cover letter which indicated a report would be made to the Commission on School Accreditation ("Commission") on Tuesday, July 22, 2014 at 10:00 a.m., three business days after Dr. Greene's receipt of the forty-six (46) page, single-spaced report. The District was informed in the cover letter that the Commission "will determine if an extreme emergency situation exists that jeopardizes the safety, security and education interests of the children enrolled in the Greenwood Public School District pursuant to Section 37-17-6(12)(b) of the *Mississippi Code of 1972*, as amended."

3. The letter stated that the board president and superintendent would be allowed fifteen minutes each to address the Commission regarding the District's response to this forty-six (46) page, single-spaced report. Further, if the Commission made any recommendation(s) at this Commission meeting, those recommendations would be presented to the State Board of Education ("State Board") at its regularly scheduled meeting which had been set for July 17-18, 2014 and then rescheduled to Wednesday, July 23, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

4. If the Commission determines at this meeting on Tuesday, July 22, 2014 that a state of extreme emergency exists, this recommendation would be presented to the State Board the next day, Wednesday, July 23, 2014, according to the cover letter. If the State Board concurs with the Commission's evaluation that a state of extreme emergency exists, statutory authority allows the State Board to ask the Governor to declare a state of emergency at Greenwood Public School District under Miss. Code Ann.37-17-6(12)(b).

5. If the Governor declares a state of emergency in a school district in response to a request made under Miss. Code Ann. 37-17-6(12)(b), the State Board, as allowed by 37-17-6(12)(c), (13), (15), and (17), may choose from several courses of action, including but not limited to the following: escrow state funds, override any decision of the local school board or superintendent or both, assign an interim conservator or contract with a private entity to administer, manage and operate the district, grant transfers to students so they can attend other school districts, establish a conservatorship or abolish the school district and administratively consolidate the district with one or more existing school districts, reduce the size of the district and administratively consolidate the parts of the district, and institute retention procedures regarding the superintendent and board members as to whether or not they will continue to hold those positions.

6. Specifically with regard to an emergency declaration under Miss. Code Ann. 37-17-6(12)(b), which is the type of emergency that MDE is seeking to declare in the Greenwood Public School District, Section 37-17-13(1) provides that the State Board has authority to abolish the school district and assume control and administration of the schools formerly constituting the district, and appoint a conservator to carry out this purpose under the direction of the State Board. The current superintendent and the current school board members would be immediately dismissed from service. Section 37-17-13(1) provides that that the State Board shall have all powers held by the previously existing school board and previously existing school superintendent. Section 37-17-13(3) states that when the district is reconstituted, no board member or superintendent in office at the time the Governor declared a state of emergency is

eligible to serve in that office for the school district when it is reconstituted, reorganized or changed after the Governor declares that an emergency no longer exists.

7. On Friday, July 18, 2014, Petitioner filed a Motion for Continuance, For Full Hearing on the Merits and for Other Relief before the Commission and also filed a public records request to request copies of the documentation relied upon by the evaluators in making the determinations that the standards had not been met. See **Exhibit B**. The MDE Office of Accreditation has indicated through its attorney, Mr. Joel Jones, that the MDE will not remove this matter from the Commission's Tuesday, July 22, 2014 agenda in order to allow the District further time, i.e. longer than three business days, to research the allegations listed in the forty-six (46) page, single-spaced audit report and in order to obtain and review the documents referenced as a basis for the report.

8. The cover letter to the audit report contends that this decision is being made in the interests of safety of the children enrolled in the District. Yet, school is not in session and will not be in session until August 7, 2014. There is no opportunity for students to be endangered at the present time. A ten day continuance, though still far less than the 30 days usually allowed to respond to an on-site evaluation (see Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards 2012 Accreditation Policy 5.1 attached as **Exhibit C**), would allow the District time to properly prepare for its appearance before the Commission and review the documentation supporting the many vague allegations referenced in the report. The audit report states that findings are based on the results of anonymous surveys, observations of instructional programs and staff, analysis of official documents on file in the district, the official reports submitted to

the MDE by the District, and interviews conducted with district personnel and the community. None of this documentation has been provided to the District though it has been relied upon as the source of "facts" to support the declaration of an extreme emergency.

9. The MDE auditors did not question the superintendent, Dr. Montrell Greene, regarding any allegations made concerning Dr. Greene's performance of his duties, or the Board President, Mr. Roosevelt Clay, regarding any allegations concerning the Board's performance of its duties. Other than noting some maintenance issues and issues regarding areas of egress, the MDE auditors did not meet with either Dr. Greene or Mr. Clay regarding any specific findings of violations of accreditation or process standards on the District campuses or with regard to the District systems, practices and procedures. Thus, Dr. Greene, the Board members, and even District personnel supervising the areas at issue are being accused of actions violating accreditation and process standards without an opportunity to respond fully on behalf of the District.

10. Further, Miss. Code Ann. Section 37-17-5 provides the following:

All controversies involving the accreditation of schools shall be initially heard by a duly authorized representative of the commission before whom a complete record shall be made. After the conclusion of the hearing, the duly authorized representative of the commission shall make a recommendation to the commission as to the resolution of the controversies, and the commission, after considering the transcribed record and the recommendation of its representative, shall make its decision which becomes final unless the local school board of the school district involved shall appeal to the State Board of Education, which appeal shall be on the record previously made before the commission's representative except as may be provided by rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education.

The statute quoted contemplates that accreditation controversies will be resolved by a hearing, where questions can be asked of MDE representatives about the findings made by the MDE. In a hearing, the District superintendent and board, as well as any district personnel responsible for the areas cited, can respond to the allegations. Right now, only one side of the facts is being presented to the Commission in a forty-six (46) page, single-spaced report. The MDE may contend that the invitation to the Commission meeting to hear the report and respond is the District's chance to refute these alleged violations of Accreditation Policy 2.1 and 22 process standards. However, the fifteen (15) minutes allotted each to the superintendent and the board president does not begin to allow enough time to respond to these allegations – the allegations specifically directed at the superintendent and board and those allegations directed at other processes and practices in the District.

11. Should an extreme emergency be declared under the process described in the cover letter to the report, those accused of violations of accreditation standards, such as board members and the superintendent, face the possibility of being dismissed from service in their capacities without even a chance to challenge the allegations and give a full response as to whether an allegation is even accurate and, if accurate, whether it has been corrected or will be corrected in the near future.

LAW

12. The District is entitled to the requested Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction as there exists: (1) substantial likelihood the District will prevail on the merits once the District has adequate time to review the supporting documents and

respond to all the allegations in the report; (2) a substantial threat that the District – its students, its superintendent and board - will suffer irreparable injury if the temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction are not granted; (3) the threatened injury to the District – its students, its superintendent and board - outweighs any threatened harm to MDE; and (4) the grant of the temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction will not disserve the public interest. See *Littleton v. McAdams*, 60 So. 3d 169, 171 (Miss. 2011). The turmoil caused in the District by an unnecessary declaration of emergency would irreparably injure the District and its students and create a leadership vacuum, a situation to be avoided if at all possible. As the situation currently stands, without the time needed to research and respond to each citation, the District could be the subject of a declaration of an emergency, creating instability when it may not be necessary. A ten day delay does not harm MDE but rather ensures that such important Commission and State Board decisions are made based on the full facts in issue. As to the public interest, the public interest and, specifically the students of Greenwood Public School District, will be served by adequate time for school leadership to review the documents supporting the audit report and respond to the allegations in the audit report.

NOTICE AND WAIVER OF POSTING OF BOND

13. Mr. Joel Jones, attorney for the MDE, and Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent of Education have been provided notice of this impending request for a temporary restraining order and injunctive relief. Designated attorneys with the Mississippi Attorney General's Office are being served via email.

14. Further, the District requests a waiver of the security as set out in M.R.C.P 65(c). The MDE and its divisions are being provided notice of the TRO request. The

District has exhausted its administrative remedies with the Commission/MDE representatives prior to filing this TRO. Additionally, the MDE is not damaged by a delay, a delay requested in the interests of fairness in order for the District to provide complete and accurate information relating to an audit report by MDE auditors. The District would argue that MDE's interests are served by a delay, so that the Commission and State Board can make a more fully informed decision.

CLAIM FOR RELIEF

15. Petitioner requests that the Commission on Accreditation, a division of the Mississippi Department of Education, be restrained from taking up the matter regarding an alleged extreme emergency in the Greenwood Public School District for a period of ten days, in order to allow the District time to receive and review the documents supporting the allegations in the audit report and prepare a response. **There is no harm resulting from this continuance as students are not in school at the present time so the contention that students' interests are being jeopardized is simply not present.**

16. Petitioner has exhausted any administrative remedies available, including filing a motion for continuance and other relief with the Accreditation Commission. In that motion, Petitioner pointed out that the time period that has been allotted by MDE to the Greenwood Public School District to prepare for the hearing before the Commission on School Accreditation, amounting to three (3) business days, is unconscionable, insufficient, and unfair for the following reasons:

(1) MDE has enjoyed the luxury of having over two and a half (2 ½) months to gather its information and prepare its 46-page audit report as compared to the District's three (3) business days to comment and/or respond to the numerous allegations of accreditation violations, especially in consideration that MDE's report, in part, attacks the credibility, governing style, and/or actions of both the superintendent and school board;

(2) the Greenwood Public School District needs more time than three (3) business days to study the audit report's findings, to conduct research to verify the report's findings, review documents relied upon by MDE, and prepare its response to MDE's findings, including any supporting documentation, to allow the school district to formulate a substantive response to MDE's findings as articulated in its audit report

(3) the superintendent and board president need more than fifteen (15) minutes on three (3) business days' notice to respond to the numerous allegations as outlined in MDE's 46-page audit report, which alleges the violations of Accreditation Policy 2.1 and 22 Process Standards

(4) that MDE's audit report has apparently taken as absolute truth any and all allegations obtained through its "confidential interviews" and "evaluation forms" that resulted in the audit report's attack on the credibility, governing style, and/or actions of both the superintendent and school board and an attack on the district personnel responsible for the areas cited in the audit report. Consequently, as a matter of fairness, the District should be given an additional ten days to prepare a response to the extensive audit report and present facts in mitigation.

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Petitioner asks that the temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction be granted to stay the appearance before the Commission for ten days so that the District may continue to prepare and review the supporting documents in order to respond sufficiently to the allegations in the report and that the security required by Rule 65(c) be waived.

Respectfully submitted,

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Petitioner asks that the temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction be granted to stay the appearance before the Commission for ten days so that the District may continue to prepare and review the supporting documents in order to respond sufficiently to the allegations in the report and that the security required by Rule 65(c) be waived.

Respectfully submitted,

**GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD
TRUSTEES AND DR. MONTRELL GREENE,
IN HIS OFFICIAL CAPACITY AS
SUPERINTENDENT, BOTH ON BEHALF OF
GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT**

By: 

Mr. Roosevelt Clay, Board President

By: 

Dr. Montrell Greene, Superintendent

OF COUNSEL:

James A. Keith
Mississippi State Bar No. 3546
Elizabeth Lee Maron
Mississippi State Bar No. 10133
ADAMS AND REESE LLP
1018 Highland Colony Parkway, Suite 800

Tommie S. Cardin
Mississippi State Bar No. 5863
Butler Snow LLP
P.O. Box 6010
Ridgeland, MS 39157-6010
Phone: 601-985-4570
tommie.cardin@butlersnow.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

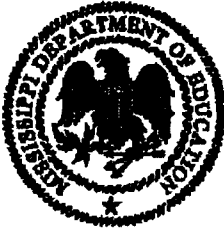
I, Elizabeth Lee Maron, do hereby certify that I have this day served a copy of the foregoing document to counsel of record. I have served the document by email to the following attorneys:

Douglas T. Miracle
Special Assistant Attorney General
Civil Litigation Division
Office of the Attorney General
550 High Street, Suite 1100
Post Office Box 220
Jackson, MS 39205-0220
Telephone: (601) 359-5654
Facsimile: (601) 359-2003
Email: dmira@ago.state.ms.us<mailto:dmira@ago.state.ms.us>

Harold E. Pizzetta, III
Assistant Attorney General
Chief, Civil Litigation Division
Office of the Attorney General
State of Mississippi
Post Office Box 220
Jackson, MS 39205
Telephone (601) 359-3816
Facsimile (601) 359-2003
HPIZZ@ago.state.ms.us<mailto:HPIZZ@ago.state.ms.us>

Dated, this 21st day of July, 2014.


Elizabeth Lee Maron



Mississippi Department of Education
Carey M. Wright, Ed.D., State Superintendent of Education

Office of School Performance

Pat Ross • Chief School Performance Officer • 601-359-1879 • FAX: 601-576-2180

Office of Accreditation and Accountability

Paula A. Vanderford, Ph.D. • Bureau Manager • 601-359-3764 • FAX: 601-359-1979
Susan M. Andrews • Bureau Director

July 16, 2014

Dr. Montrell Greene, Superintendent
Greenwood Public School District (4220)
401 Howard Street
Greenwood, Mississippi 38935

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Mr. Roosevelt Clay, Board President
Post Office Box 9166
Greenwood, Mississippi 38930

Dear Dr. Greene and Mr. Clay:

Enclosed is the report of the on-site evaluation that was conducted in the Greenwood Public School District during April 29, 2014, through May 2, 2014. The evaluation procedures included a comprehensive evaluation of a limited number of accreditation standards and accountability requirements of the State Board of Education (SBE). All findings described in the enclosed report are based on the analysis of data collected during the on-site evaluation, including (a) interviews conducted with district staff, (b) observations and completed evaluation forms, (c) surveys completed by district staff, (d) analysis of official documentation on file in the district, and (e) analysis of official reports submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education.

Based on the evaluation findings, the school district appears to be in violation of accreditation Policy 2.1 and the following process standards: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 12, 12.1, 13, 14, 15, 19.2, 20, 20.1, 20.2, 20.4, 23, 23.1, 23.5, 23.8, 27, 28, 29, 29.1, 33, 34, 34.1, 35, 35.1, 36, 36.2, 36.3, 37 and 37.1.

In accordance with Section 37-17-6(12)(b) of the *Mississippi Code of 1972*, as amended, and the Accreditation Policies published in the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2012*, a report will be made to the Commission on School Accreditation on Tuesday, July 22, 2014. The Commission meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Fourth Floor Board Room of the Central High School Building in Jackson, Mississippi. The Commission will determine if an extreme emergency situation exists that jeopardizes the safety, security and educational interests of the children enrolled in the Greenwood Public School District pursuant to Section 37-17-6(12)(b) of the *Mississippi Code of 1972*, as amended.

"Quality Education for Every Child"

Central High School Building • 359 North West Street • P.O. Box 771 • Jackson, MS 39205-0771

EXHIBIT

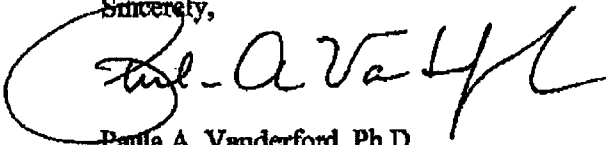
A

Dr. Montrell Greene, Superintendent
Mr. Roosevelt Clay, Board President
July 16, 2014
Page Two

The superintendent and the board president will be allowed to address the Commission prior to the Commission's determination. Please limit your comments to fifteen (15) minutes each. If the Commission makes any recommendation(s) at this meeting, the recommendation(s) will be presented to the State Board of Education at its regularly scheduled meeting on July 23, 2014, at 9:00 a.m. in the 4th floor board room of the Central High School Building in Jackson, Mississippi. The State Board of Education will also allow the superintendent and board president the opportunity to make comments.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (601) 359-3764.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paula A. Vanderford", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Paula A. Vanderford, Ph.D.
Executive Secretary, Commission on School Accreditation

Enclosure

c: Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.
Patrick Ross

INTRODUCTION
GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT (4220)

Accreditation Audit

April 29, 2014

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), through the Office of Accreditation, was directed by the Mississippi Legislature during the 2012 session to implement the provisions of MS Code 537-17-6 and the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2012. In an effort to conduct the most comprehensive number of audits in the most effective and efficient manner, it was determined that districts would not be evaluated on the process standards related to programs currently receiving regularly-scheduled audits, such as all federally funded programs and the process standards pertaining to district finances. State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Carey Wright, requested the Office of Accreditation conduct an unannounced evaluation of the Greenwood School District beginning April 29, 2014, to determine the district's current level of compliance with a limited number of accountability requirements and policies, and accreditation standards approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) as published in the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2012. The audit team subsequently recommended the Office of Federal Programs conduct an audit of its programs in the district. This audit was conducted May 19-20, 2014, and the findings have been included as part of this report. Findings of questionable expenditures totaled approximately \$95,283.00.

In performing the audit, the team conducted an analysis of the data collected during the on-site visit, including (a) observations of instructional programs and staff, (b) analysis of official documentation on file in the district, (c) analysis of official reports submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), (d) interviews with district personnel and the community, and (e) anonymous surveys completed by district staff. Responses to the confidential survey conducted during the audit portrayed employees who have been victimized through harassment, intimidation, and retaliation by a bully administration. The audit results identified a school district in a state of disarray, characterized by a pervasive sense of secrecy, mistrust, and apprehension.

Upon arriving in the district, the audit team was immediately notified that the room provided for them to work was under visual and audio surveillance. They were informed that it is important to the superintendent to be able to monitor staff and activities and this is one method used. Survey responses and interviews with district staff indicate the superintendent's fixation with monitoring people and events in the district is unsettling and further promotes a culture of conspiracy. Additionally, auditors were told that some staff had concerns over the anonymity and security of the survey administered as part of the audit, because they felt one staff member had facilitated the superintendent's ability to monitor and shut down their emails. It would be impossible to expect positive outcomes in such a tumultuous and uncertain environment. There seems to be a greater focus on capturing the misbehavior of adults than on implementing strategies for effectively improving schools and increasing student outcomes.

Contributing significantly to the low morale of the district was the recent hearing held for the non-renewal of a well-liked high school principal. It consisted of eight days of testimony over a month's time. This hearing left students, employees, and the community in emotional turmoil, and raised questions of possible misconduct by the superintendent over whether he had used his position to try to influence testimony. The board had not made a decision at the time of the audit, but later it was learned that the board upheld the superintendent's recommendation to non-renew the principal. It is significant to note that while the auditors were visiting the high school, they were approached by a very respectful, well-mannered student who presented them with a petition that "Requested the

School Board to Remove Dr. Montrell Greene and Rename Mr. Percy Powell Principal of Greenwood High School." The petition was signed by more than half of the student body.

The auditors heard complaints that focused on allegations of unprofessional conduct by the superintendent and school board members. A number of complaints and reports cited cases in which the superintendent had retaliated against district personnel by job demotions, removing relevant job responsibilities from staff, suspending personnel and/or dismissing employees with no cause. Additionally, anyone from the previous administration is regarded with suspicion and is treated as such. Staff report that anyone who was part of the previous superintendent's "team" is targeted and is being systematically removed by the superintendent and the board. Local media reported in the June, 2014 board meeting, that the superintendent recommended and received board approval to dismiss four staff members, including the personnel director who had been employed approximately 12 years with the district. The reason stated for dismissal was to reduce budget obligations. Reports of subsequent board meetings indicate personnel continue to be hired.

Members of the school board have failed to restrict their role and function to matters of setting policy and assessing results. Given this board is comprised of members with enough years of experience who have taken full advantage of the training opportunities offered through the Mississippi School Boards Association (MSBA), it is difficult to draw any conclusion other than the board willfully refuses to accept the limit of its statutory duties to restrict its role and function to matters of establishing policies that promote student achievement and assessing these results. It is reported that members of the school board direct the superintendent's hiring and firing decisions. At least two board members interfere extensively in the hiring and firing process and are actively involved in day-to-day operations of the district. Since the release of the Personnel Director in June, MDE has received reports that the school board president is now conducting background checks. These board members must know that they are operating outside their realm of responsibilities. Their behavior is so blatant that other board members have to be aware of the actions of these individuals who are so heavily involved in the day-to-day operations of the district. Other board members are guilty of not addressing this misconduct and of not holding these individuals accountable. To know and tolerate unethical behavior without addressing it, is viewed the same as condoning it. This school board seems to have completely lost sight of its function.

Staff members report that there is very little focus on students or student achievement. District documentation of expenditures do not appear to support or align with its goals and vision. For example, district documentation reveals considerable funds were spent on "parent extravaganzas." Survey responses and staff interviews portrayed these as "singing and dancing shows" that had no impact or effect on student achievement. They were viewed primarily as a platform to feature the superintendent and school board members. While efforts to involve parents are important, more important is making funding decisions that are aligned with the primary focus of the district's goal of improving student achievement. This is especially important for a district that is reported to be experiencing financial difficulties. A recent newspaper account reported the district is facing a \$719,000 shortfall in its 2014-15 budget.

Other concerns addressed in the complaints received by auditors included the information regarding:

- The high rate of turnover of district personnel due to the superintendent's management style and board members' interference as being largely responsible for the high turnover rate. In the last two years, three (3) federal program directors have been employed and three (3) business managers have been employed. Auditors reviewed the resignation letter of one of the individuals who had been employed as Federal Programs Director for only three (3) months. One of her reasons for resigning stated that she had become aware of the misuse of federal funds that occurred without her knowledge or consent;*
- Discipline decisions made at the school level being overturned by the superintendent or school board;*

- *The lack of stability in administration at the school level due to the superintendent transferring principals;*
- *Feelings that the superintendent places individuals in schools to report on the actions of individuals and thereby negatively affecting the morale of district staff;*
- *The recommendations made by the superintendent and/or board members instead of by the principals at the building level;*
- *The inequity of employment procedures including the lack of notice of openings and the arbitrary assignment of salaries; and*
- *The lack of compliance by the school board in implementing state statutes concerning the school board's role in the governance of the school district.*

Overwhelming evidence from confidential interviews and surveys, newspaper articles, and district records revealed an educational community fraught with dissension, fear, low staff morale, and distrust of the superintendent and the school board. As one employee stated, "Everything feels like a plot." The predominant lack of trust is further complicated by failure of the superintendent and the school board to act in a transparent manner in accordance with established policies and state law. The combined efforts of the superintendent and the school board have created a climate of fear and a culture of mediocrity as well as an unstable and anxious environment for personnel. However, the most tragic consequence of their actions are that these conditions will prevent the establishment of a safe and positive school environment in which the students in this district can receive the highest level of education that they deserve.

The MDE audit identified district noncompliance with Accreditation Policy 2.1 and 22 Process Standards. Furthermore, the academic performance levels of the majority of the schools are consistently low and the overall performance rating for the district is "D." (See enclosed History of Performance.) The district's violation of the 22 Accreditation Standards, Accreditation Policy 2.1, and state and federal law as well as the lack of student achievement demonstrate there is a critical situation existing in the Greenwood Public School District that seriously affects the safety, security, and the educational interests of the children enrolled. This condition must be addressed and corrected, or the school district will continue to suffer the consequences that prohibit the development of a safe, orderly, and healthy school climate that focuses on increased student achievement.

**COMPLIANCE WITH PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCREDITATION
STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS
GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT (4220)
APRIL 29 - MAY 1, 2014**

All FINDINGS described in this report are based on the analysis of data collected during the on-site evaluation, including (a) observations of instructional programs and staff, (b) analysis of official documentation on file in the district, and (c) analysis of official reports submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), (d) interviews with district personnel, and (e) anonymous surveys of district personnel. The deficiencies or FINDINGS and suggestions for CORRECTIVE ACTIONS and TIMELINES are listed below.

Process Standards 7, 10, 11, 16, 18, 20.3, 20.5, 22, 23.2, 23.3, 23.4, 23.6, 23.7, 23.9, 24, 25, 26, 31, and 37.2 were not evaluated.

Greenwood School District is in compliance with Accreditation Process Standards 4, 8, 12.2, 12.3, 17, 19.3, 19.4, 19.5, 19.6, 21, 30, 31, 32, 34.2, 34.3, 34.4, 34.5, 35.2, 35.3, 36.1, 36.4, and 37.2.

1. **ACCREDITATION POLICY 2.1.** *The Commission on School Accreditation (CSA) determines the annual accreditation status of all public school districts based on compliance with process standards. Information concerning district compliance with process standards is reported to the Commission on an annual basis. Reporting false information is a violation of the accreditation requirements set forth by the State Board of Education and may result in the immediate downgrade of the district's accreditation status.*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Accreditation Policy 2.1. A comparison of the 2013-2014 MSIS Personnel/Accreditation Data Report with other documents on file in the district, such as employee contracts, lists of staff, job descriptions, and official school board minutes document the following that a number of errors, omissions, and inconsistencies exist among MSIS reports, contracts, school board minutes, and other district documentation. Some of the problems noted include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Employee Information such as number of days of contract, salaries, and funding sources are not reported accurately on the Personnel/Accreditation Data Report when compared with other district documentation;
- All personnel are not listed in the MSIS Report;
- Employees who worked in more than one position were not reported separately;
- Percentages of time worked are not reported accurately;
- Salaries reported in numerous employee contracts, district payroll reports and board minutes differ with the salaries reported in the MSIS Personnel/Accreditation Data Report for 2013-2014;
- Salaries reported for numerous employees in the Personnel/Accreditation Data Report and in employee contracts could not be matched to the district pay scales;
- The number of days employed in the contracts of some employees and in board minutes did not match the number of days employed reported in the 2013-2014 Personnel/Accreditation Data Report;
- The reported locations of some personnel don't agree with their actual assignments;
- Employees who worked in more than one position were not reported separately; and
- Percentage of time worked is not reported accurately.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: All information reported on the Personnel/Accreditation Data Report must be true, accurate, and complete. The data is used to generate a variety of very important statistical reports, including the Mississippi Report Card and the Superintendent's Annual Report as well as supply national

statistics. It is provided in response to the hundreds of requests made annually by the legislature, the public, and the press. Moreover, the Office of Accreditation analyzes the MSIS Personnel/Accreditation Data Reports submitted by the district to evaluate school district compliance with accountability requirements and accreditation standards reported to the Commission on School Accreditation (CSA) and State Board of Education (SBE) annually. The annual Personnel/Accreditation Data Report submitted by each school district greatly influences the funding for local school districts. It is used to drive the funding formula for Career Technical Education, Special Education and Gifted Education. Errors in this data can result in improper funding to the district.

It is imperative that the individual responsible for the reporting of MSIS data attend the MIS Summer Conference.

- A. The district superintendent and school principals are responsible for ensuring that all data reported to the MDE is true and accurate and is verified by supporting documentation on file in the school district. All administrative staff members and any other staff assigned to report MSIS data should be properly trained on the MSIS data reporting requirements, procedures, and timelines to ensure that only the highest quality data is submitted. Administrators and other appropriate personnel should become familiar with the *MSIS Personnel Reference Manual* that can be downloaded and printed from the MSIS Information web page. The individual(s) responsible for personnel records and MSIS data must perform their tasks with diligence and thoroughness that demonstrates the importance of keeping accurate, complete, up-to-date records.

- B. Documentation supporting compliance with employment policies and procedures must be current and on file in the district. The district must immediately develop a timeline to implement a process to review job descriptions, work assignments and duties as well as contracts and salaries to ensure that all employees have been accurately reported on the Personnel/Accreditation Data Report and that employee contracts substantiate same data. Approved job descriptions must be developed and on file for all positions, including all additional duties assigned to employees. Each employee must have an approved job description that accurately describes his/her job duties and qualifications.

- C. Extreme care must be taken to report all data accurately and in compliance with MSIS reporting procedures. All personnel data must be consistent. That is, personnel information approved by the school board must agree with information reported in the MSIS report and in other district documents. When reporting active personnel to MSIS, keep in mind the following:
 - All assigned district duties, job titles, and salaries must be reported to the MDE via the MSIS Personnel/Accreditation Data Report;
 - Additional supplements and stipends must be reported for each district employee in accordance with MSIS guidelines;
 - Employees who begin work after the official school-starting day must be reported with less than 100% district time;
 - For *Days Employed*, indicate the number of days the employee is under contract;
 - *Special Program Codes* are used to indicate that all or part of the employee's salary is paid from federal or special State funds;
 - When an employee works in more than one position, the salary for each position is reported separately;
 - When an employee's salary is paid from more than one funding source, the employee's salary and minutes must be prorated; and

- Any period block that is after normal school hours must be indicated with "AS."
- The work assignments of employees must be accurately reflected in the Personnel/Accreditation Data Report and must correspond with each school's daily schedule. The period numbers should correspond to number of periods in the school day and should show the class/course/assignment for each employee, including their planning period. (Exceptions include Pre-K and Kindergarten and some special education teachers.) Generally, in a seven period day, six of the class periods should correspond to six courses and one period should indicate planning in the schedules of *full time teachers*.
- The required amount of instructional time for all teachers should be reflected in class schedules. Adequate non-instructional time that allows for movement within the school day, including class changes and lunch, should be built into these schedules. School schedules should be uniform among all teachers within the same school.

D. All administrative staff members should have access to the current MDE approved list of Work Area/Course Codes and specific endorsement requirements for each job code. The Approved Course Code List is available online.

The MDE will assign staff to monitor the personnel/accreditation data reporting process for school year 2014-2015 and verify that all required information is accurately reported following established procedures.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

Note: In accordance with Accreditation Policy 2.5.1, districts in violation of Accreditation Policy 2.1, reporting false information, may have their accreditation status downgraded to Probation.

2. **STANDARD 1. School board members complete required basic and continuing education programs in order to effectively perform their duties in the manner prescribed by law. (MS Code 25-41-1 et. al; 25-61-1 through 17; 37-3-4(5); 37-6-7, 9, 11, and 15; and 37-7-306(1-4))**

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 1. Based on a review of school board minutes of meetings, additional information provided by the district, as well as confidential interviews and surveys, the school board has failed to fulfill its role and responsibility and effectively perform its duties in the manner prescribed by law. Evidence gathered through confidential interviews and a review of school board minutes by accreditation staff reveals that members of the school board have failed to restrict their role and function to matters of setting policy and assessing results. The board has taken advantage of the training opportunities offered through the Mississippi School Boards Association (MSBA). However, some members willfully refuse to accept the limit of their statutory duties and restrict their role and function to matters of setting policy and assessing results.

A. Mississippi Open Meetings Act: A review of official records on file, including school board minutes, as well as information gathered from district personnel indicates that the school board is in violation of the Mississippi Open Meetings Act, Section 25-41-1 et seq. of the *Mississippi Code* of 1972, as amended, regarding policies and procedures for governing school board meetings. Some examples include, but are not limited to, the following items:

- 1) **Meetings:** Prior to every regular school board meeting, a work session is held. Although it is called a work session, the board votes and takes action on agenda items during this session; consequently, it is actually a board meeting. Every meeting of the school board must be noticed and open to the public and recorded in official minutes.

- It was reported by a number of individuals that the board met at a church in April of 2013 when interviewing/hiring the current superintendent. The meeting was not noticed and in fact, the district office was not notified of the meeting so that it could be posted. There is no record of the meeting. It was reported that another meeting reported as a board retreat took place in May 2013 that was also not posted.

The purpose of MS Code 25-41-7 is to discourage private meetings of public bodies, and closed session discussions and consideration of public business. The actions of this board exhibit a complete disregard of the intent of the Mississippi Open Meetings Act. These practices show a lack of transparency in board governance that is contrary to state law.

- 2) **Executive Sessions:** The reasons a public body may enter into executive session are enumerated in Section 25-41-7 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972*, as amended. The Greenwood School Board is not in compliance with its own policy, Greenwood School Board POLICY BCBK regarding executive sessions. Note:

- It is standard procedure for the Greenwood School Board to enter into executive session to discuss "personnel matters" and other vague reasons that do not warrant an executive session. The official board minutes document an established practice of entering into executive sessions under the broad general category of "personnel matters". The school board has not limited the use of executive sessions to discuss specific, discrete matters that relate to an individual employee's job performance, character, professional competence, or the physical or mental health of a person holding a specific position. To the contrary, the official minutes document a consistent pattern of going into executive session to discuss "personnel matters" and taking action on any personnel matters listed on the agenda, including routine approval of recommended personnel or salaries. The board should reexamine the criteria that qualify an issue for executive session. *Sensitive or delicate subjects do not necessarily qualify for executive session.* "It is questionable whether salary scales and salaries are the proper subject for the declaration of an executive session. General across the board salary increases are public knowledge and not a proper subject for the declaration of an executive session." MS AG Op., Clements (February 8, 2002)

Sensitive or delicate subjects do not necessarily qualify for executive session.

- B. **Board Minutes:** Any action taken by the school board must be recorded in its minutes. The school board speaks **ONLY** through its minutes. The importance of recording accurate minutes of school board meetings cannot be over emphasized.

- Board minutes did not always report actions taken during executive session.
- Board minutes were not recorded for every board meeting.
- It was reported that the superintendent requests staff to revise board minutes that have already been approved by the board.

Board meetings should be conducted according to policy with actions clearly defined at the board meeting and recorded in its minutes. The only way a board can speak is through the recorded actions in its minutes. If the action is not clearly recorded, it did not happen.

C. **Personnel Matters:** Based on a review of board minutes and other district documentation, the Greenwood School Board does not follow statutory employment procedures consistently. The following deficiencies were found:

- There is no evidence to support that written notice of determination not to offer renewal contracts, including the specific reasons for non-reemployment, is given to all professional employees within the required timelines.
- The school board does not adhere to Section 37-7-301 of the *Mississippi Code* of 1972, as amended or Section 37-9-17 of the *Mississippi Code* of 1972, as amended, regarding the two-tier recommendation process for employment. On or before April 1 of each year, the superintendent recommends licensed or non-instructional employees to the local school board and, unless good reason to the contrary exists, the board shall elect the employees so recommended. The board only has the authority to approve or disapprove hiring recommendations.
- Confidential interviews and surveys indicated that teachers are afraid of retaining their jobs based on the interference of the school board in the employment process. The board's practice of not accepting the hiring recommendations of the administration and their actions to terminate employees without just cause have left district personnel with a feeling of job insecurity, and has contributed to the declining morale of district employees.
- Even though the school board only has the authority to approve or disapprove hiring recommendations, the Greenwood School Board has not limited its actions to this role. See Findings regarding school board members under Standard 1. This practice is in direct conflict with Section 37-9-17 of the *Mississippi Code* of 1972, as amended.
- The board goes into executive session to discuss "personnel matters", but discusses all employees recommended. It is reported that all personnel are reviewed and some are singled out and tabled if they don't meet approval of the board.
- Board minutes from the April 15, 2014, meeting present the recommendations of administrators under two categories.
 - i. One category was for "Principals, Assistant Principals, and Directors" whose salaries are determined per the salary scale. This list represented almost all principals and assistant principals.
 - ii. The second category was for Administrators, Directors, Principals, and Supervisors" and specified it was for individuals who are not represented by a scale. This list included a new hire for Greenwood High School for assistant principal with a salary of \$97,000 while the current assistant principal was listed on the first list at an established salary of \$75,000.

D. The Greenwood School Board does not adhere or comply with the hearing procedures provided for in Mississippi's *Education Employment Procedures Law* in accordance with Section 37-9-111 of the *Mississippi Code*.

- Based on a review of board minutes and other district documentation, the superintendent of the Greenwood School District presented a principal a notice of non-reemployment. Some reports indicate it was in December of 2013 and another report indicates it was February 14, 2014. The individual requested a hearing. The public hearing, which was held before a hearing officer, began March 25, 2014, and ended April 27, 2014. The board made a decision on June 13, 2014, to affirm the recommendation of the superintendent to not renew the contract of the employee. *The board's decision was beyond 30 days from the conclusion of the hearing.*
- In viewing the video provided by *Gwoodlive.com*, of the June 13, 2014, board meeting, it was noted that the board stated two instances of non-compliance with accreditation standards as reasons for affirming the superintendent's recommendation to non-renew the high school principal. Specifically, the board included

the following two statements regarding accreditation in its reasons for upholding the principal's nonrenewal:

- 1) Declining school accreditation level. The Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Accreditation does not assign school accreditation levels.*
- 2) An accreditation standard finding regarding cumulative folders and permanent records. The Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Accreditation has no Finding on Record for the Greenwood Public Schools or Greenwood High School regarding cumulative folders and permanent records. Furthermore, the Office has no record of any visits to the district by the Office of Accreditation prior to April, 2014.*

These statements could be misleading and easily attributed as actions taken by the Office of Accreditation. For the record, it must be made clear that the Office of Accreditation had no affiliation with any hearing procedures nor does the Office of Accreditation have on record any Findings related to the Greenwood Public School District.

E. School board members have not restricted their role to one of governance.

- Section 37-7-301(f) and 37-7-306 of the Mississippi Code, as amended requires every board member selected after July 1, 2002, to spend at least one (1) full day in a school in the district they represent without compensation; however, members may not interfere with school operations. Numerous reports were provided from individuals within the district and from confidential surveys and interviews that two school board members, in particular, frequently visit individual schools as if observing teachers and supervising instructional programs in the schools. These two board members have far exceeded their authority and role of governance. These unannounced, unscheduled, and inappropriate visits by individual board members have been viewed as attempts to supervise the operation of the schools, to evaluate the performance of the staff, including the administration, and to intimidate employees. It is reported that they question staff decisions and question staff member about the performance of administrators.
- These same two board members also attend special events at schools, athletic practices and other school events, and question students and staff regarding event operations. They interfere with coaches' efforts to implement the athletic programs. Through their interference, they have created dissension and confusion among coaches, players and the programs. The constant threat of non-renewals and/or changes in coaching assignments has resulted in lowered morale among coaching staff and has negatively affected student athletes and their participation in athletic programs. These board members have been reported to threaten staff with their jobs if they don't win a state championship. These same individuals actively recruit coaches from other districts, promise them jobs, and indicate they will fire the current coaches.
- It has been reported to MDE, that since the release of the Personnel Director, one board member is now obtaining background checks from the Greenwood Police Department.

A board member has the authority to act on behalf of the school district only when the school board is in session. A board member has no authority to act individually. Board members are simply citizens until there is a quorum and the meeting is called to order.

- F. Confidential interviews and surveys of district personnel indicate that the board reacts to demands from parents and community, and they make decisions that overturn district policies regarding issues related to discipline. Parents with complaints are able to bypass the administration and go directly to the school board. As a result, policies have been applied inconsistently. Administrators should be given the opportunity to resolve issues prior to their being presented to the school board. Appropriate practice would have board members referring the information to the administration for resolution. These issues should have been reported to and channeled through the superintendent to resolve before being brought out in a public forum. *Issues and concerns should***

*be addressed in the boardroom as the last step toward resolution. The superintendent has the authority to delegate student disciplinary matters to appropriate school personnel in accordance with Section 37-9-14(2)**

- G. The superintendent and the school board currently operate in a manner that indicates neither has the ability to provide effective leadership and to ensure proper governance. The vision and goals don't seem to drive district decisions. The energy and time focused on the dysfunctional system of operations leaves little time to focus on meaningful and positive planning of district goals for improving student achievement, a critical condition that has adversely affected the school district. The district's performance continues to be less than satisfactory. This situation must be addressed and corrected or the school district will continue to suffer the consequences that prohibit the development of a safe, orderly and healthy climate that promotes increased student achievement.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The legislative intent of the training requirement for school board members is to provide local board members with the basic knowledge and information necessary to effectively perform their duties in the manner prescribed by law. If the school board is unaware of its role, it should receive further training. *When making decisions, the board must rely on the professional knowledge, expertise or training of the professional educators and must limit their decisions to matters of policy.* Certainly, they should be sufficiently and adequately informed when making decisions and especially when reporting information in a public forum. *The school board is a policy-making body. They must resist reacting to pressure from parents to make policy changes that are not in the best interest of all children in the district, resulting in policies being applied inconsistently.* The role of the school board is to set policy, delegate executive, supervisory and instructional authority to its employees, and appraise the results achieved in light of the goals of the school district; whereas, the role of the superintendent is to function as the chief administrator of the district and implement the policies established by the school board for the day-to-day operation of the school district. The board is to focus on the vision and mission for the district. Implementation is the responsibility of the superintendent. The local school board must follow and enforce rules and regulations of the State Board of Education for their own government and for the government of the schools in the manner provided by law. A properly functioning school board should avoid becoming involved in day-to-day operations of the school district. Knowing that their actions set the climate for the district, board members must always perform their responsibilities with the highest level of professionalism. Refer to the specific powers and duties of the school board outlined in *Sections 37-7-301 and 37-7-301.1 of the Mississippi Code.*

- A. The local school board is required to follow and enforce rules and regulations of the State Board of Education and state laws for their own government and for the government of the schools in the manner provided by law. The school board must comply with the Open Meetings Act (Section 25-41-1 et seq.), which requires that all deliberations, decisions, and business of all governmental boards and commissions, unless specifically excluded by statute, shall be open to the public. Although citizens have a right enforceable by law to be present at the meeting and to see and hear everything, they are spectators at the meeting and have no right to participate or interfere in any manner with the discussion, deliberation, or decision-making process. The board may go into executive session for those reasons listed in the Open Meetings Act. [See Section 25-41-7] The purpose of Mississippi Code 25-41-7 is to insure that public business is conducted in an open and public manner.
1. The Open Meetings Act limits discussion of personnel matters during an executive session to discrete matters such as an individual's job performance, character, professional competence, or physical or mental health.
 2. The reason stated for going into executive session must be of sufficient specificity to inform the public that there is a specific, discrete matter or areas which the board has determined should be discussed

In executive session, and no other topic may be discussed in the session. In other words, the board must disclose enough information so that the audience can know in fact that there is some specific area or matter that the board has concluded should, for the time being, be discussed in private.

3. The enforcement provision of the Open Meetings Act gives any member of the public the right to enforce the Open Meetings Act by the Mississippi Ethics Commission and in the chancery courts of the state.
- C. For the effective operation of the district, it is important that the school district develop and implement an organizational plan that clearly defines the policy making, executive and administrative functions of the district and establishes the lines of communication between the school board and administration and between the administration and professional staff. The organizational plan should include a structured organizational chart that outlines the chain of command and lines of communication.
- D. Parents and members of the community who contact school board members should be encouraged to contact the school district staff most directly responsible for the issue, from teacher to principal to superintendent, following the appropriate chain of responsibility. If the concern is not resolved, it may go before the board. Board members must explain to parents and community that the board has no authority except when in session.
- E. School board members have authority to act only as a body when the school board officially convenes in a formal, legal meeting. An individual board member has no authority to act on their own. All meetings of the board must be open to the public. All meetings held by the school board, including work sessions, are official meetings of the board subject to the same state laws and policies concerning school board meetings.
- F. The school board must comply with state laws and approved local board policies concerning employment and dismissal procedures for personnel. When the superintendent shall recommend the employment of licensed employees or non-instructional employees to the local school board, unless good cause exists, the board shall elect the employees so recommended. The school board does have the authority to set salaries and approve raises for staff; however, those decisions should be (1) in compliance with state laws, (2) based on approved school board policies, and (3) recommended by the superintendent. They must be applied consistently.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

3. **STANDARD 2.** *School board policies that comply with state and federal statutes, rules, and regulations serve as the basis of operation for the district, and current copies of school board policies are published and available for public review. (MS Code 25-41-7; 25-61-1 through 17; 37-9-1 through 75; 37-9-101 through 113; 37-7-301(p)(w); and Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964)*

FINDINGS: Greenwood School District is not in compliance with Standard 2. School board policies do not serve as the basis of operation for the school district. The school board must effectively perform its duties prescribed in Section 37-7-301 of the *Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended*, in addition to all others imposed or granted by law. School boards must govern in a manner that concentrates on policymaking to improve student achievement. Policies must be developed, implemented and practiced by all district personnel, including the school board, *in accordance with the highest educational, financial and ethical standards*. District surveys indicate that policies are not followed and are sometimes ignored or changed.

- A. Greenwood School District has adopted MSBA school board policies. There are two sets of policies available on line. A published copy was available for review at the district office. A published copy should also be

available at each school in the district to allow for easy access for those parents who may not have access to the Internet. According to interviews and school board minutes some policies are presented for review periodically; however, the majority of the policies have the exact same adoption date. An all-inclusive adoption of the policies still requires the board to review policies for appropriateness. Policies must be reviewed individually to ensure they are suited for the Greenwood School District.

- B. The school board does not ensure that the local school board policies are reviewed and revised annually. All policies are not current, and irregularities and inconsistencies remain in the documents when compared with other district documents. In addition, board policies are inconsistently applied, including suspensions assigned by school principals that are overturned by district administration or board members. The superintendent and assistant superintendent revised a policy on suspensions without board approval or informing individual schools of the revision.
- C. The school board has failed to follow and enforce policies that comply with state and federal statutes and approved local school board policies concerning employment and dismissal procedures. See the previously listed findings for Standard 1. In addition, the board does not comply with GPS Policy CEC for appointed superintendents. There is no evidence that *"the board endeavored to conduct interviews on a school day so that applicant could visit the schools of the district while they were in session."* In fact, the selection of this superintendent was done in secrecy. Without posting a notice or noticing the school district office, the board met in a local church to select the current superintendent. It was reported to auditors that, on the chance that anyone gained knowledge of the meeting, the board instructed local police officers to stand by to prevent anyone from entering.
- D. The school district has failed to comply with its Staff Protection – Harassment /Abuse Policy (GAEA) in accordance with Section 37-11-20 of the *Mississippi Code, Title VII*, and specified in the Employee Handbook in a memo from Chester Leigh, Assistant Superintendent.
- E. Irregularities and inconsistencies exist between school board policies, the personnel manual, the student handbook and other district documents. Some policies and procedures published in the school handbooks are not consistent with current state requirements and SBE policy, including policies pertaining to attendance, grading, and graduation requirements. It is the district responsibility to review policies for accuracy and consistency with other documents. The following are examples and not all inclusive:
 - On page 52 in the handbook, it is stated that Carnegie Units are limited to grades 9-12 but they can be earned as low as 7th grade.
 - The policy in the handbook on page 52 allows students who score proficient on the SATP or MCT2 to be promoted in that content area. This is not allowable. These are two separate requirements. One is to pass the course and the other is to pass the subject area test.
 - The policy on page 53 of the student handbook regarding exemptions is confusing. Scores on MCT2 and SATP determine if a student is exempt the first nine weeks; however, students take the statewide tests at the end of the course. That is the intent of subject area or end-of-course testing.
 - On page 57 of the student handbook, section C pertains to issuing grades when students owe money to the school. The following excerpt is from an AG Opinion. *"It is the Opinion of this office that the school would have the authority to not issue a report card or transcript to the individual or in the case of a graduating senior as described in your second question until such fines are paid. However, the school would have no authority to withhold grades or other information contained in a cumulative folder requested by another school for the purpose of enrolling the student in that school as such an*

action would have the effect of denying the student an opportunity to receive an education. Similarly, this office finds no authority for the district to not allow a child to progress to the next grade level for failure to pay outstanding fines."

- F. The school board has failed to adopt, maintain and implement policies that are current and clearly define and ensure that the necessary plans, procedures, programs and systems are in place to effectively implement a discipline system that supports principals and teachers and ensures decisions are made consistently for all students. It was reported that discipline policies are applied inconsistently, and board members and the superintendent overturn the administration's decisions regarding student discipline and make decisions based on their personal relationships with individuals in the community. Discipline has been administered at the school level in accordance with school board policy, only to be overturned by district administration.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The operation of the school district must be based on approved school board policies and procedures that are current and that comply with state and federal statutes and SBE policies and standards. Adopting policies that reflect the district's vision for student achievement is the primary role of the board.

- A. Policy development should be aligned with the strategic plan and should support improved student achievement and organizational effectiveness. *The student handbook and other documents must function under the authority of the approved board policy, as a means of communicating directives and operational procedures to the administrative staff.*
- B. Although the school board does have the authority to set salaries and approve raises for staff, those decisions should be (1) in compliance with state laws, (2) based on approved school board policies, and (3) recommended by the superintendent. The board should establish pay scales for all categories of employees, including administrative, instructional, and classified staff. Salary scales should be established based on qualifications, professional license, degree level, and years of experience.
- C. The district must begin a review of all board policies to ensure that all policies are properly indexed with the dates of school board adoption, and those dates are consistent with board action as recorded in the official board minutes. All policies must be clearly identified as policies of the Greenwood School District and must be appropriately suited for the Greenwood School District. A system for assuring that the policy manual is kept current should be instituted.
- D. Once school board policies are developed and approved, the district should develop and implement a systematic process to review all board policies, at least annually, and make necessary revisions when needed.
- E. Student handbooks and all other district documentation must contain information that is consistent with local board policies and practices and must comply with current state and federal laws and SBE policies.
- F. The board speaks to day-to-day situations through its policy statements. It is critical that the school board follow its policies that are currently in place. Properly adopted policies have the force and effect of law. *Policies serve no purpose if they are not used to govern.* The board should establish salary schedules that are applied to positions brought before the board.

Policies serve no purpose if they are not used to govern.

This citation of noncompliance will remain on record until the school board has taken corrective action to ensure that local board policies comply with state and federal statutes and SBE policies and standards and also that such policies are being fully implemented consistently in accordance with state and federal statutes and SBE policies and standards.

TIMELINE: This process should begin immediately and should be ongoing.

4. **STANDARD 3.** *The school board assigns all executive and administrative duties to the superintendent, who is properly licensed and chosen in the manner prescribed by law. {MS Code 37-6-3(3-4); 37-9-7, 13, 14; 37-61-9; and 37-151-5(h)}*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 3. The superintendent has failed to administer the schools in accordance with MS Code 37-9-14 and to satisfy the management responsibilities of the school district superintendent as required by State law. Based on a review of documentation on file in the district, interviews with the district staff, and community input, the evaluation team determined that the superintendent does not provide effective educational leadership in key areas including management of district personnel, successful management of district resources, and effective implementation of policies.

A. Confidential interviews and surveys report the superintendent manages the district in a dictatorial manner through the use of retaliation and intimidation, including reassigning, transferring, and terminating personnel as a method of retaliation. He has created an atmosphere of fear among district employees. It was reported consistently that the superintendent uses other personnel to report to him what others are saying. One report stated that "everything feels like a plot." These kinds of actions have promoted divisiveness as well as lowered staff morale.

B. The superintendent does not ensure that the school district operates according to school board policies and procedures that comply with state and federal statutes and SBE policies and standards. See FINDINGS for Standard 2.

- The superintendent is not in compliance with the Greenwood Public School (GPS) Policy CEH that states that the superintendent shall not be engaged in any other business. The superintendent serves a church full time as a minister and is President of Empowerment 360.
- The policy and process for hiring of personnel is not followed by the superintendent or school board members.
- The superintendent does not comply with the Greenwood Public School Policies JDDA & JDDA-P regarding Bullying and Harassing Behavior and the requirements to maintain an environment free from bullying and harassing behavior.
- The superintendent is not in compliance with GPS Policy CE and does not manage material and fiscal resources to support the schools and programs. (Refer to report from the Office of Federal Programs.)
- The superintendent does not comply with GPS Policy CEB: to delegate student disciplinary matters to appropriate school personnel as evidenced by findings in Standard 37.1.

C. As the educational leader of the district, the superintendent is not implementing an instructional management plan that clearly defines the academic goals necessary for improving student achievement. The superintendent has limited the curriculum coordinator's responsibilities, including removing functions of the position that have significant impact district-wide on instruction and student achievement. Consequently, the focus from the instructional leadership at the district level is inadequate. The lack of

guidance will produce confusion among the instructional staff regarding the expectations of curriculum requirements.

- D. The superintendent does not ensure that schools and/or other facilities are maintained according to standards required for safe and orderly schools. (See Findings for Standard 37.1.)
- The superintendent's actions do not comply with statutory employment procedures. A review of board minutes and interviews and surveys with district personnel indicate the superintendent and some board members are excessively involved in hiring of personnel rather than the superintendent presenting the recommendations of individual principals to the school board, as required by state law under the two-tier recommendation process for employment. Section 37-9-17 states that the principal of each school will recommend to the superintendent the licensed employees or non-instructional employees. This statute also states that if such recommendations meet with the superintendent's approval, the superintendent shall recommend the employment of such licensed employees or non-instructional employees to the school board.
 - The superintendent recently demoted the Athletic Director to Assistant Athletic Director and reduced his salary as well. No notice was given in accordance with Mississippi's *Education Employment Law* within the proper time frame.
- E. In the board meeting of April 15, 2014 an individual was recommended as assistant principal at Greenwood High School. However, his name was not included in the list of names of assistant principals whose salaries are determined by district salary schedules. It was reported in board minutes that his salary is to be approximately \$20,000 more than other assistant principals. Also, an application was found in district documentation that indicates he completed an application for the principal position and it was reported to auditors that he was told he was to be principal. It was reported that the former high school principal was not officially terminated by the school board until June 13, 2014. MDE recently received a report that the individual approved as assistant principal at the high school has resigned due to the superintendent's failure to meet his commitment to this individual.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: In order to effectively and efficiently operate the school district, a positive relationship among the superintendent, local school board members, principals, faculty and the community must exist. The relationship among the local school board, the superintendent, principals, faculty, and the community directly affects all aspects of the school district as well as the local community and the public's perception of the school system. Establishing a positive working relationship among these entities is imperative before the district can begin to focus on school improvement and increasing student achievement. Putting the needs of the students first and working together in a positive manner must become a priority for the school district.

- A. The superintendent's role is management: management of district programs, daily operations, fiscal resources, and human resources. The superintendent is responsible for putting plans, procedures, programs, and systems in place to achieve clearly defined, desired results. In turn, principals must be allowed to carry out these plans and programs. As manager, some of the superintendent's duties include the following:
- Establishing effective mechanisms for communication to and from staff, the school board, and community;
 - Overseeing a program to manage and monitor discipline procedures for equity and effectiveness;
 - Organizing the central office in a manner consistent with district priorities and resources;
 - Overseeing budget development and implementation that ensures appropriate expenditures and clear and timely budget reports;

- Maintaining a positive and professional working relationship with the school board as well as district staff;
 - Developing and implementing a system for reporting to the board on policy issues, achievement growth/lack of growth, and other significant issues; and
 - Establishing a mechanism to promote community and business commitment and involvement with the district and building a relationship of trust with same.
- B. The relationship between the local school board and the district superintendent directly affects all aspects of the school district as well as the local community. The manner in which they relate to each other sends a strong message to students, staff, parents, and the public.
- The board and the superintendent must share a common vision for the district and must agree that improving student achievement is the highest priority. Establishing a definitive role for each entity is essential for the school district in order to focus on student achievement and school improvement.
 - Putting the needs of the students first and working together in a positive manner must become a priority for the school district.
- C. As the educational leader of the district, the superintendent must implement an instructional management plan that clearly defines the academic goals necessary for improving student achievement. These academic goals, as well as the instructional management plan, must be clearly conveyed to all district staff.
- D. Effective and efficient operation of the school district requires that a positive relationship exist among the superintendent, local school board members, principals, faculty, and the community. There must be a relationship among the board, administrators, faculty, and the community that promotes trust, honest communication, and sincerity.
- E. School board policies must include the superintendent's job description and must clearly define roles and expectations for the superintendent, board president, and board members. Well-defined roles for the superintendent and school board are critical to the development of a strong working relationship. In defining those roles, the school board must govern from the level of policy.
- F. For the effective operation of the district, it is important that the school district develop and implement an organizational plan that clearly defines the executive and administrative functions of district personnel and that establishes the lines of communication between the school board and administration and between the administration and professional staff. The organizational plan should include a structured organizational chart that outlines the chain of command and lines of communications, and the school board must approve the organizational plan and must comply with such.

This citation of noncompliance will remain on record until the Office of Accreditation is able to verify compliance with Standard 3.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

5. **STANDARD 5.** *The school district employs in each school a licensed librarian or media specialist who devotes no more than one-fourth of the workday to library/media administrative activities. {MS Code 37-17-6(3)(a-e)}*

5.1 *if the student enrollment is 499 or less, a half-time licensed librarian or media specialist is required.*

5.2 *if the student enrollment is 500 or more, a full-time licensed librarian or media specialist is required.*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 5. Librarians at each school were interviewed with the exception of the middle school. All schools were in compliance of this standard with the exception of Greenwood High School. The librarian at the high school goes to the alternative school to teach English each day during third period. This is from 9:45-10:40 am each day.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The high school librarian's schedule must be adjusted. A librarian may spend no more than one-fourth of her workday on library/media service administrative activities, but may not spend any of her workdays teaching a class.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

6. **STANDARD 6.** *Student support services (appraisal, academic, and/or personal advisement, and educational and/or career planning and referral) are provided in each school by qualified student support personnel. {MS Code 37-9-79}*

Note: *Student support personnel may only provide those services and activities in the area(s) that each individual is specifically qualified to provide. All student support personnel will use appropriate job titles that reflect their area of training, expertise, and license. For example, a Social Worker will be referred to as the School Social Worker and may not use the title of or be referred to as the School Guidance Counselor.*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 6. Counselors are limited in the scope and number of students they can see because most of them have additional non-counseling duties assigned. Those may include:

- checking immunization forms and following up on temporary forms;
- registering new students;
- checking proofs of residency after school starts;
- checking for birth certificates; etc.

The American School Counselor Association's guidelines for counseling services should be reviewed by the district and modifications to counselor duties made to adhere to those guidelines. Currently there is no structured plan for counselors to collaborate or to work under the guidance of one person.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

7. **STANDARD 9.** *The school district implements a formal personnel appraisal system for licensed staff that includes assessment of employee on-the-job performance. {MS Code 37-3-46(b)}*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 9 regarding a personnel appraisal system that includes assessment of employee on the job performance. The superintendent evaluated one employee in January of 2014 using an instrument that had been developed or revised earlier in the month and which the employee was unacquainted.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The district must implement an annual, formal appraisal system for licensed staff that complies with the Mississippi Evaluation System.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

8. STANDARD 12. The school district complies with state law and State Board of Education policy on enrollment requirements.

12.1 Residency requirements {MS Code 37-15-29} {SB Policy 6600}

12.2 Immunization requirements {MS Code 37-7-301(i), 37-15-1, and 41-23-37}

12.3 Age of entry requirements {MS Code 37-15-9}

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 12.1. The registration packets included a copy of a form for verifying residency that designated what proofs were accepted and a place for a school official to sign and date the form. The forms differed across schools. At the high school the proofs of residency were attached to the Home Language Survey and not the residency form; the auditor asked two employees where the residency form included in the registration packet was but neither knew. Some of the problems with residency included the following:

- No residency form with signature and date or proofs of residency;
- Only one proof of residency attached;
- Accepting a P. O. Box as a proof of residency;
- Accepting a letter from a person saying that the parent was renting an apartment in that complex- but there was no rental agreement (another student living in that complex had a rental agreement.);
- Address on residency form not matching the address on the proofs of residency;
- Residency information not being accurately transferred to cumulative folders and permanent records; and
- No plan to purge residency forms from the cumulative folder at schools where they are kept in the folder when a student transfers out of the district.

The registration form for the Greenwood Public School District contains the following statement:

Students Who Are 18 Years Old: May sign their own forms and provide two proofs of residence in their name.

Section 37-15-29, *Mississippi Code of 1972*, provides that no minor child may enroll in or attend any school except in the school district of his residence. As defined by Section 1-3-27, *Mississippi Code of 1972*, the term "minor", when used in any statute, shall include any person, male or female, under twenty-one years of age. Consequently, student who are 18 years old may NOT sign their own forms or provide two proofs of residency in their name. These students must reside with their parents in your school district and complete the verification of residency process established for all students in the district.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The district must develop and implement approved local school board policy for residency verification that complies with state law and State Board of Education Policy. If appropriate residency verification has not been secured at the time of initial enrollment, the school of current enrollment must see that this is done. An orderly and accurate process for securing proofs of residency should be instituted.

- Designate and train staff at each school to implement approved school board policy for residency verification when students initially enroll in the school district.
- The district must review the residency forms used in schools to ensure that the forms include all of the required information.
- For initial enrollment, whether kindergarten or any other level upon transfer into the district from outside the district, the initial enrollment form requiring two proofs of residency must be used and photocopies of the proofs should be attached to the form.
- If the registration process shows that residency has changed, repeat the process for initial enrollment.
- Residency forms should be placed in the cumulative records of the students and the records should follow students from elementary through high school in the district.

- Residency forms should be completely filled out, and a school district official's signature on these forms is mandatory.
- Unless local policy prohibits, appropriate residency verification secured upon initial admission in the district is acceptable for as long as the student's residency does not change.
- A plan for training new personnel must be developed and implemented, as well as, a plan for removing residency forms from cumulative folders before they are transferred out of district.
- When all records have been corrected, contact the Office of Accreditation to schedule a follow up visit to verify compliance with this standard.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

9. **STANDARD 13.** Any transfer student from a school or program (correspondence, tutorial, or home study) not accredited regionally or by a state board of education [or its designee(s)] is given either a standardized achievement test(s) or teacher-made special subject test(s) to determine the appropriate classification of the student within 30 days after filing for transfer. Notice of the administering of such test(s) shall be given to the applicant not less than five days prior to the date of the administration of such test. (MS Code 37-15-33) (SB Policies 3801 & 3802)

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 13. Board policy JBAB, adopted October 16, 2012, does not specify which tests will be administered or how placement decisions will be made. Some employees who are involved in registration were unaware of the policy or the requirements of this standard.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Board policy JBAB must be amended to include this information, and all administrators, counselors and any other staff who assist at registration must be trained in district policies regarding transfer students.

- The local school board policy should provide specific direction concerning which test(s) will be used to determine grade placement and the criteria for awarding Carnegie unit credit as well as the timelines for giving notice to parents concerning the testing process and for completing the testing process.
- Designate and train staff at each school to implement approved school board policy for determining the placement of students who transfer from a non-accredited school.
- When the local school board policy has been developed and implemented, contact the Office of Accreditation to schedule a follow up visit to verify compliance with this standard.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing. The policy must be amended and the information included in the 2014-2015 student handbooks and the training should occur prior to summer registration.

10. **STANDARD 14.** Permanent records and cumulative folders for individual students contain all required data and are collected, maintained, and disseminated in compliance with state law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and the Confidentiality Section of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 1997 Amendments. (See Appendix E and the current edition of Mississippi Cumulative Folders and Permanent Records Manual of Directions.) (MS Code 37-15-1 through 3; 37-15-6; 37-15-10)

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 14. In addition to the problems noted with Standard 12, other problems noted include:

- Addresses on permanent records and cumulative folders were different.
- Addresses on records did not match current residency form.
- Dates enrolled and withdrawn were incorrectly completed.
- Birth certificate numbers are not accurately recorded.
- Attendance data was missing for some years.
- Courses and grades for some courses were missing.
- For some years, no grade/courses were posted;

- Transfer students records did not include courses/grades not posted in former schools/districts;
- Parents' full names as listed on birth certificates are not recorded completely on both permanent records and cumulative folders.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The district must initiate a process to check each permanent record and cumulative folder to ensure that the information on the two records is accurate and complete and that the two records match. No record should be transferred to another school in the district or to another district until the record match has been completed. Each counselor, administrator, teacher and secretary who works with or is responsible for student records must be trained by the district on how to keep accurate student records. The MDE Office of Accreditation's website has two short videos, *Online Tutorials for Cumulative Folders and Permanent Records Part A and B*, as well as the online *Mississippi Cumulative Folder and Permanent Records Manual*. The MDE website link is: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/accreditation>

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing. The process must be completed prior to any record being transferred and no later than pre-registration for the 2014-2015 school year.

11. **STANDARD 15.** *The school district engages in planning to review the educational status of each school in the district and to address specific actions relative to accreditation and performance separately. {MS Code 37-3-49(2) (e)}*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 15. The district has a Strategic Plan that received board approval on September 11, 2012.

- The plan addresses improving the overall performance of the district, but there is no plan that addresses improving performance of individual schools.
- The plan presents five major goals that are to be accomplished by the district. Each goal has a set of measurable indicators of success/benchmarks and a list of strategies that are to be implemented in an effort to insure the benchmarks are obtained.
- Board members indicated they were a part of the development process for the plan and minutes reflect that an overview is provided by the superintendent to the board on a monthly basis.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Develop and implement local school board policy for long-range strategic planning.

- The district must develop and implement plans for improving school performance for each school must be addressed.
- Documentation of the on-going involvement of stakeholders other than school personnel and board members must be provided.
- The plan should contain value statements.
- Objectives should be specified as long or short term and time lines provided.
- Action items should be included.
- The completed/revised plan should be presented for board approval yearly with the approval date a matter of record in the minutes.

TIMELINE: This process must begin immediately and should be on-going.

12. **STANDARD 19.** *The academic year provides a minimum of 180 teaching days in which both teachers and pupils are in regular attendance for scheduled classroom instruction. {MS Code 37-3-49, 37-13-61 through 69, 37-151-5(f), and 37-151-7(3)(c)}*

19.1. **DELETED.**

19.2. *The teaching day must provide at least 330 minutes of instruction per day. {MS Code 37-13-67}*

- 19.3** The school district must ensure that during the academic school year a minimum of 140 hours of instruction is provided for each Carnegie unit of credit offered and 70 hours for each ½ unit offered, except for remedial instructional programs, dual enrollment/dual credit, correspondence courses, MS Virtual Public School courses, and innovative programs authorized by the State Board of Education.
- 19.4** No more than two of the 180 days may be 60% days. Both teachers and pupils must be in attendance for not less than 60% of the normal school day. (Effective with school year 2013-14.)
- 19.5** The school district schedules preparation for graduation ceremonies in such manner that graduating seniors are absent from classes for no more than three days prior to the end of the school year). (Districts Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance are exempted.)
- 19.6** The summer school/extended year program meets all applicable requirements of the regular school program. {MS Code 37-3-49}
- Students from other schools enrolled in summer programs provide written approval from the principal of their home schools.
 - Students enrolled in an extended year program complete all remaining course/subject requirements/objectives before credit for the course/subject is issued. {MS Code 37-3-49}
 - Students enrolled in a summer program are limited to earning one Carnegie unit of credit during a traditional summer school session, which does not apply to Extended Year programs and approved MS Virtual Public School courses. (Districts Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance may be exempted under MS Code 37-17-11.)
- 19.7** Districts utilizing an Early Release Schedule or a Delayed Start School Day Schedule must have the schedules approved by the school board and published and disseminated.

Note: Any request for an exception to the above standard must be submitted in writing to the Commission on School Accreditation for review and action.

Note: If the Governor has declared a disaster emergency or the President of the United States has declared an emergency or major disaster to exist in this state, the local school board may request approval from the State Board of Education to operate the schools in its district for less than one hundred eighty (180) days. {MS Code 37-151-7(3)(d)}

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standards 19 and 19.2. Local district policies have not been updated to include changes in Standard 19.2. The district must provide a minimum of 330 minutes of instruction per day. There is no allowance for providing 27.5 hours per week.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: This citation will remain on record pending the update of policies and the revision of all other district documents that reflect outdated policies regarding Standard 19.2.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

- 13. STANDARD 20.** The school district requires each student, in order to receive a high school diploma, to have met the requirements established by its local board of education and by the State Board of Education. {MS Code 37-16-7} (SB Policy 3801, 3802, 3803)

20.1 Each student receiving a standard high school diploma has earned the minimum number of Carnegie units as specified in Appendix A. (See Appendix A.) (SB Policies 2902 and 2903) Students receiving a standard diploma may select from three graduation pathways as specified by the local school district's graduation requirements.

- Entering ninth graders in 2005-2006 and thereafter (seniors of school year 2008-2009 and later) are required to have a minimum of 21 Carnegie units as specified in Appendix A-1.
- Entering ninth graders in 2008-2009 and thereafter (seniors of school year 2011-2012 and later) are required to have a minimum of 24 Carnegie units as specified in Appendix A-2, unless, in accordance with school board policy, their parent/guardian requests to opt the student out of Appendix A-2

requirements. This student would be required to complete the graduation requirements specified in A-1.

- *Entering eleventh graders in 2010-2011 and thereafter (seniors of school year 2011-2012 and later) who chose the Career Pathway Option are required to earn the minimum graduation requirements specified in Appendix A-3. (MS Code 37-16-17)*
- *Beginning in school year 2011-2012, all eighth grade students are required to have an Individualized Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) prior to exiting the eighth grade.*

20.2 Each student receiving a standard diploma has achieved a passing score on each of the required high school exit examinations. (MS Code-37-16-7) (SB Policies 3600, 3801 and 3803)

20.3 Each student who has completed the secondary curriculum for special education may be issued a special diploma or certificate of completion, which states: "This student has successfully completed an Individualized Education Program." (MS Code 37-16-11(1))

20.4 The student who fails to meet the graduation requirements is not permitted to participate in the graduation exercises.

20.5 Each student with disabilities receiving a Mississippi Occupational Diploma has successfully completed all minimum requirements established by the State Board of Education. (MS Code 37-16-11(2)) (See Appendix G.)

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standards 20, 20.1, 20.2, and 20.4. Compliance could not be verified due to the lack of current policies or errors in published graduation requirements. Appendix A-1 is not included as a graduation option so it is assumed that the district does not offer the "opt out" or District Option for graduation. The following problems were noted:

- Appendix A-2 in the student handbook does not list ½ unit of health as a requirement.
- The graduation requirements listed in the Course Selection Sheets for 11th and 12th grade students that were provided to auditors are incorrect.
- The Course Selection Sheets do not list the Carnegie Units available to be earned in the 7th and 8th grades.
- Policy IHF, titled Graduation Requirements, states that all parents of senior student are required to meet with high school counselors to ensure parents receive information regarding graduation requirements and the student's status and progress in meeting these requirements. The meeting requirement at this point in the student's career is about four years too late to benefit the student.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The school district must ensure that each student receiving a high school diploma has met the requirements established by its local board of education and by the State Board of Education. It is good practice to develop an individualized schedule beginning with the 7th grade students to ensure graduation requirements are met. This plan should be developed with the student and his/her parents during a student's seventh grade year and should be reviewed and revised each year when necessary. Contents of the handbook and any other documents used in the district must contain accurate information and must be consistent with district policies regarding graduation requirements.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

14. STANDARD 23. The school district is in compliance with state and/or federal requirements for the following programs:

- 23.1 Early Childhood Programs (kindergarten and teacher assistant) (MS Code 37-21-1 et. seq.) (SB Policies 4400, 4401, and 6301) (Refer to Mississippi Kindergarten Guidelines.) (Districts Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance are exempted from provisions of subsection (4) of MS Code 37-21-7.)**
- 23.2 Vocational-Technical Education (MS Code 37-31-1 et. seq.) (SB Policies 8100, 8200, 8300, 8400, 8500, 8600, 8700, 8800, 8900, 9000, 9100, 9200, 9300, 9400, and Federal Code)**

- 23.3 Special Education {MS Code 37-23-1 through 9} (SB Policies 7201, 7203, 7204, 7205, 7206, 7208, 7210, 7211, 7212, 7213, 7214, 7219, and Federal Code) (See State Policies Regarding Children with Disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) and the Mottie T. Consent Decree.)**
- 23.4 Child Nutrition {MS Code 37-11-7} (SB Policies 2001, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2009 and Federal Code)**
- 23.5 No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Titles I, II, III, IV, V, VI, X, and any other federally funded programs and grants (SB Policies 7801, 7802, 7803, 7804, and Federal Code)**
- 23.6 Technology in the Classroom {MS Code 37-151-19(3)} (SB Policy 7500)**
- 23.7 Driver Education {MS Code 37-25-1 et. seq.} (SB Policy 3000)**
- 23.8 Pre-Kindergarten {MS Code 37-7-301(ss)} (SB Policy 2904) (Refer to Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines.)**
- 23.9 Gifted Education {MS Code 37-23-171 through 181} (SB Policy 3700) (Refer to the current edition of the Regulations for Gifted Education Programs in Mississippi, and the Gifted Education Program Standards.)**

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standards 23, 23.1, 23.5 and 23.8.

STANDARD 23.1: The district is not in compliance with Standard 23.1.

- A review of the master schedule and teachers' lesson plans indicated students were not scheduled for physical education for the required thirty minutes per day at all schools.
- Davis and W. C. Williams Elementary schools do not have a scheduled recess time.
- Bankston Elementary has a twenty-minute recess, but physical education is scheduled every third week.
- Lesson plans were insufficient to support all of the required activities: integrated language arts, music, art, math, social studies, science, dramatic play, and physical activities.
- The schools were unable to document that training related to principles and methods of early childhood education and reading instruction for kindergarten teachers and assistant teachers had been provided during the current school year.
- The schools did not have a parent handbook.
- At all of the buildings, the kindergarten toilet doors did not permit opening of the locked door from the outside in case of an emergency.
- A review of the cumulative records at Bankston Elementary School indicated that one record did not have a birth certificate and another record has neither the birth certificate nor the immunization record.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The master schedule must be revised to include the required minutes of daily physical activity.

- The administration must monitor kindergarten lesson plans to ensure compliance and to ensure that all activities are covered.
- The district's professional development plan must include training related to principles and methods of early childhood education and reading instruction for kindergarten teachers and assistant teachers.
- An early childhood parent handbook must be developed that includes program philosophy, goals and policies.
- The toilet door latches must be replaced to allow entrance from the outside.
- The administration must ensure that all records are current and complete.

TIMELINE: As soon as possible and no later than fall of the 2014 – 2015 school year.

STANDARD 23.8. The district is not in compliance with Standard 23.8.

- Teachers did not reference *Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Three-and/or Four-Year-Old Children* in lesson plans.
- Physical education is provided on a quarterly basis, but sixty minutes of indoor/outdoor physical activities are not provided on a daily basis for each child.

- The restrooms for the pre-kindergarten classes are located at the end of the hallway and farther than 125 feet from the classrooms.
- The toilet doors did not permit opening of the locked door from the outside in case of an emergency.
- The school has not provided fifteen contact hours of annual training specifically related to early childhood development or evidence of staff development as required by the Mississippi Department of Health for the supervisors of early childhood educators and assistants.
- The school does not have a parent handbook that addresses program philosophy, goals and policies.
- The school has not provided three days for teacher/parent conferences to inform parents or guardians of student progress.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The administration must monitor lesson plans to ensure compliance with the *Mississippi Early Learning Guidelines for Three-and/or Four-Year-Old Children*.

- The class schedule must be revised to provide sixty minutes of indoor/outdoor physical activity daily.
- The school must review the placement of the pre-kindergarten classrooms to ensure that they are within 125 feet of the restroom.
- The toilet door latches must be replaced to allow entrance from the outside.
- The school district must provide fifteen contact hours of annual training specifically related to early childhood development and staff development as required by the Mississippi Department of Health for the supervisors of early childhood educators and assistants.
- An early childhood parent handbook must be developed that includes program philosophy, goals and policies.
- The school calendar must include a minimum of three days for teacher / parent conferences.

TIMELINE: As soon as possible and no later than fall of the 2014 – 2015 school year.

STANDARD 23.5. The district is not in compliance with Standard 23.5. An audit of the district's federal programs in May has found the district noncompliant with requirements for administering the district's federal programs.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: See enclosed report from the Office of Federal Programs for specific findings and corrective action.

TIMELINE: The Office of Federal Programs has established timelines. See enclosed report.

15. **STANDARD 27.** *The school district implements an instructional management system that has been adopted by the school board and includes, at a minimum, the competencies and objectives required in the curriculum frameworks approved by the State Board of Education. (Districts Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance are exempted.) (MS Code 37-3-49(2)(a-b) and 37-3-49(5) and SB Policy 4300)*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 27. While the school district adopted an *Instructional Management Plan* on August 7, 2013, it has not been fully implemented at all schools.

- The executive summary outlines the minimum requirements, but does not provide for a continuous assessment of teacher practices that could be used for instructional improvement through job embedded differentiated professional development.
- The plan states, in part, "Teachers are required to use a variety of research-based instructional strategies and actively engage students in activities that promote conceptual understanding."
- Based on a review of lesson plans and classroom observations, the audit team found many lessons were knowledge level DOK1 and every school had some classrooms in which students were not engaged.
- At the secondary level, classroom observations indicated many students not engaged, and teachers did not maximize instructional time.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The *Instructional Management Plan* must be revised to include a component for monitoring and improving teacher effectiveness. The building level administration must ensure that lessons use a variety of instructional strategies that engage students in rigorous activities to promote conceptual understanding. The administration must implement a procedure to ensure effective implementation of the Instructional Management System at all schools.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

16. **STANDARD 28.** *The district follows an established board policy that defines criteria for the academic promotion/progression/retention of students. Such criteria prohibit the retention of students for extracurricular purposes.*

28.1 *The school district implements a uniform grading policy. (SB Policy 403) (MS Code 37-11-64 and 37-11-66)*

28.2 *A student who is enrolled in any grade higher than Grade 6 in a school district must be suspended from participation in any extracurricular or athletic activity sponsored or sanctioned by the school district after a semester in which the student's cumulative grade point average is below 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. This portion of the standard will be jointly monitored and enforced by the State Board of Education and the Mississippi High School Activities Association. (MS Code 37-11-65)*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 28.

- The school board policy approved September 10, 2013 that defines criteria for academic promotion, progression and retention of students does not prohibit the retention of students for extracurricular purposes.
- School Board Policy IHE for Promotion and Retention relates a student's score on standardized tests to successful completion of a subject area course and allows students to pass a course and be awarded credit for the specific subject. Standardized test scores may qualify students to be exempt also. It is difficult to understand how a student's SATP score could exempt a student in the first nine weeks, when these are "end of course" tests.
- Subject area/academic course requirements including the standards required for promotion and the State Board of Education's requirement to achieve mastery of academic skills measured by standardized assessments are two entirely separate requirements. One cannot be used to award credit for the other.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The district must review and revise the current policy to address the practice of retention of students for extracurricular purposes. Policy IHE must be revised to establish standards for grading and promotion/retention as totally separate requirements from the successful completion of any and all standardized testing.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

17. **STANDARD 29.** *The school district provides alternative education programs for the categories of students identified in MS Code 37-13-92. (SB Policies 901 and 902)*

29.1 *The school district provides access to an alternative education program that meets the program guidelines outlined in MS Code 37-13-92 and the guidelines established by the State Board of Education. (SB Policy 901) (See guidelines for Alternative/GED School Programs.)*

29.2 *The school district, in its discretion, may provide access to a GED Option program that meets the program guidelines outlined in MS Code 37-13-92(4) and the guidelines established by the State Board of Education. (SB Policy 902) (See guidelines for Alternative/GED Programs.)*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 29.1. The disciplinary policy is available online for students and parents/guardians, and a hard copy is available by request only. The alternative education program does not have an Individual Instruction Plan (IIP) on file for students. The only documentation sent to the Alternative Learning School is a letter of approval for admission. The disciplinary policy does not describe the process for the development of an IIP prior to placement nor is this responsibility designated for the Alternative Placement Committee. The policy describes the process for selecting the Alternative Placement Committee, but that process excludes staff from the home school and does not reference a committee to develop an IIP.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The administration must revise the procedure of distributing the disciplinary policy to parents/guardians to ensure equitable access. The administration must revise the disciplinary policy to include a process for the development of an Individual Instructional Plan (IIP) prior to placement of a student into the alternative school program and a description of the process for the appointment of a committee to develop an IIP. The administration must ensure that each student at the Alternative Learning School has an IIP that emphasizes academic performance, behavioral modification, functional skills and career education. The committee at the school level must develop the IIP prior to a student's admittance.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

18. **STANDARD 33** *The curriculum of each elementary or middle school (any configuration of grades K-8) at a minimum consists of reading/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health education, and physical education, which may be taught by a regular classroom teacher. (MS Code 37-1-3(2) and 37-13-134)*

Note: *In any configuration of grades K-8, the curriculum must include 150 minutes of activity-based instruction per week and 45 minutes of instruction in health education per week. Implementation of the activity-based instruction must meet or exceed the standards as approved by the State Board of Education. A regular classroom teacher may provide instruction in the arts, health education, and physical education in a self-contained classroom setting.*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 33. Based on interviews and a review of teacher lesson plans, the competencies and objectives for health were not being taught for the required forty-five minutes per week at all grade levels, K - 6.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: The district administrators must review the instructional practices to ensure health objectives are taught for the required minutes weekly. The administration must implement a practice of lesson plan review and/or classroom observations to verify implementation.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

19. **STANDARD 34.** *Student teacher ratios do not exceed the following: (MS Code 37-151-77).*
- 34.1 *Student teacher ratios do not exceed 22 to 1 in kindergarten, except in instances in which a full-time assistant teacher is in the classroom. If a full-time assistant teacher is employed, 27 may be enrolled. (MS Code 37-151-77) (See Mississippi Kindergarten Guidelines.) (SB Policy 2100)*
 - 34.2 *Student teacher ratios do not exceed 27 to 1 in classrooms serving grades 1 through 4 unless approved by the State Board of Education. (Schools Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance are exempted.) (MS Code 37-151-77) (SB Policy 2100)*
 - 34.3 *Student teacher ratios do not exceed 30 to 1 in self-contained classes serving grades 5-8. (MS Code 37-151-77)*
 - 34.4 *Student teacher ratios do not exceed 33 to 1 in departmentalized academic core classes serving grades 5-12. (MS Code 37-151-77)*
 - 34.5 *The total number of students taught by an individual teacher in academic core subjects at any time during the school year shall not exceed 150. (Schools Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance are exempted.)*

Note: *A teacher who provides instruction through intra-district or inter-district distance learning or supervises students taking virtual courses will be exempt from the 150-student limitation. A lab facilitator or principal designee will be responsible for the assignment of grades and related activities at the receiving school.*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standard 34.1. Davis Elementary School has four kindergarten classes with enrollments of 26, 23, 22, and 12 for a total of eighty-three kindergarten students. Two certified

teachers and three assistant teachers are assigned to those classes. One kindergarten teacher resigned early this year and has not been replaced.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Davis Elementary School must fill the kindergarten vacancy or revise the master schedule to be within the class enrollment limits.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

20. **STANDARD 35.** *The school district complies with the applicable rules and regulations of the State Board of Education in the operation of its transportation program. {MS Code 37-41-53} {SB Policies 7903, 7904, 7906, 7907 and 7909}*

35.1 *All buses are inspected on a quarterly basis and are well-maintained and clean. {SB Policy 7909}*

35.2 *Each bus driver has a valid bus driver certificate and a commercial driver's license and operates the bus according to all specified safety procedures.*

35.3 *The school district has on file a yearly motor vehicle report on each driver and evidence that each driver has received two hours of in-service training per semester. {SB Policies 7903 and 7906}*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standards 35 and 35.1. See ATTACHMENT A for FINDINGS.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Correct all deficiencies noted on ATTACHMENT A.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

21. **STANDARD 36.** *The school district provides facilities that meet the following criteria: {MS Code 37-7- 301(c) (d)}; 37-11-5, 49; and 45-11-101}*

36.1 *The school district provides facilities that are clean and sanitary.*

36.2 *The school district provides facilities that are safe.*

36.3 *The school district provides operational facilities that are equipped to meet the instructional needs of students and staff.*

36.4 *The school district provides air conditioning in all classrooms in each school. {MS Code 37-17-6(2)}*

FINDINGS: The district is not in compliance with Standards 36, 36.2 and 36.3. See ATTACHMENT B for FINDINGS.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Correct all deficiencies noted on ATTACHMENT B.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

22. **STANDARD 37.** *The school district complies with State Board Policies and State and Federal laws to provide Safe and Healthy Schools.*

FINDINGS: The district was not in compliance with Standards 37 and 37.1, to wit the below referenced *Mississippi Codes* are not being enforced. In addition to Standard 37.1, safety issues were noted with Standards 35 and 36.

- No school has established a suitable reunification site.
- Page 42 and page 61 of the student handbook contain conflicting information regarding emergency drills.
- At the high school, there were reports of numerous fighting incidences. It was also reported that the superintendent and school board do not support the administration in administering the discipline policy in compliance with Section 37-9-69, *Mississippi Code* of 1972. The superintendent and school board overturn discipline decisions for student misconduct made by school administrators. Board minutes and other reports indicate that the superintendent had the policy addressing suspensions for fighting revised to reduce the days from 10 to 3. Therefore, discipline policies are insignificant.
- Some campuses are described as too open. Anyone can walk onto the campus unnoticed without having to go through the office. Buildings are also open.

G. A hostile work environment has been created through the actions of the superintendent and some board members. Bullying and harassment tactics such as threatening individuals with job loss are used to intimidate and control employees. These actions have produced dissension among staff and a faculty that is stressed, fearful, and suffers from very low morale resulting in a high rate of staff absences and staff turnover. Staff report the content of their conversations may be misrepresented to the superintendent by other staff members, and employees have been disciplined and fired because of what they said, promoting a climate of mistrust among staff members. The district does not comply with the document in the personnel policy manual entitled *Staff Protection – Harassment /Abuse Policy (GAEA)* in accordance with Section 37-11-20 of the *Mississippi Code, Title VII*, and specified in the Employee Handbook in a memo from Chester Leigh, Assistant Superintendent.

CORRECTIVE ACTION: Each school must establish a reunification site at least one mile from campus. Safety issues noted in Standards 35 and 36 must be cleared. The district must review its discipline policy including the student code of conduct and enforce them in accordance with the standards set forth in Section 37-11-53, *Mississippi Code* of 1972. The district must also establish a solid code of student conduct in compliance with the provisions of Section 37-11-55, *Mississippi Code* of 1972.

TIMELINE: Immediately and Ongoing.

ATTACHMENT A

STANDARD 35

<u>Bus #</u>	<u>Defects</u>
1	Parking brake won't hold Back up buzzers
25	Lift freezes when folding
30	Emergency door and window buzzers Back up buzzer Brake light lower right
3	Back up left light
14	Emergency left front window
23	Top stop sign light
2	All emergency windows buzzers Rear left turn signal
10	Stop sign top light Emergency window buzzers
18	Brake lights lower
24	Back up light right
29	Back up left light
21	Door and window buzzers Left back up light
12	Right back up light Roof emergency exit no handle Emergency door buzzer
31	Front window buzzers
11	Emergency door buzzer
19	Doors and window buzzers
4	All window buzzers Left lower brake light

5	Window and roof buzzers
	Both lower brake lights
13	Window buzzer
	Back up buzzer
	Cracked emergency window
27	No emergency brakes
	Cannot find parts due to the age of bus
	This bus was pulled.
32	Driver's windshield was cracked

ATTACHMENT B

STANDARD 36

Bankston Elementary

- No light exit signs
- Emergency lights were inoperable
- Playground is not fenced
- Buildings B & E, Exterior lights are unprotected
- Windows do not meet life safety codes for 2nd means of egress (all classrooms)
- Most rooms did not have evacuation maps
- No two way communication with the classrooms
- No second means of egress were labeled
- Room 40 & 54, Extension cords being use as a permanent power source
- Room 50, Power strips plugged into power strips
- Room 48, Missing ceiling tile
- No restrooms (girls' and boys') handicap accessible
- No bathrooms were vented
- Girls' restrooms and library had unprotected lights
- Building D, door closures missing on exit doors
- Library emergency lights inoperable
- Room 23, Excessive paper on walls
- Not enough shock absorbent material under playground equipment
- Main Office, Utility cut offs map not posted
- Utility cut offs not labeled
- No posting capacity in cafeteria and auditorium
- Cafeteria staff no fire safety training

Davis Elementary

- Emergency lights were inoperable
- Lighted exit lights were inoperable
- Cafeteria staff no fire safety training
- Utility cut offs not labeled
- Utility cut offs map not posted in the main office
- No two way communication with the classrooms
- Room 13 & 14, Power strips plugged into power strips
- Most rooms did not have evacuation maps
- No two way communication with the classrooms
- No second means of egress were labeled
- Windows do not meet life safety codes for 2nd means of egress
- Custodial closet not secured
- No K style fire extinguisher in kitchen
- No capacity posted in auditorium and cafeteria
- Only one fire extinguisher in gym
- Exit lights in auditorium inoperable
- Power strip plugged into power strip in computer room
- Room 5, Christmas tree lights

W. C. Williams Elementary

- Hall Lights unprotected
- No two way communication with the classrooms
- Windows do not meet life safety codes for 2nd means of egress
- Main hall boys' restroom broken window
- Main hall girls' restroom unprotected light
- Exit lights and emergency lights are inoperable in auditorium
- Girls' restroom long hall broken window
- No ventilation and handicap accessibility in all restrooms
- Poor lighting in learning center

- Inoperable door closure between gym and long hall
- Inadequate number of fire extinguishers in gym
- Exit door signage inadequate in Gym
- Room 29, Curtains covering windows
- Main Office, No main utility cut off map
- Main utility cut offs not labeled
- Unprotected lights in dry storage
- No fire safety training for cafeteria workers

Threadgill Elementary

- No second means of egress in computer room
- Room 18, Inadequate lighting
- North door exterior light unprotected
- Library, Door knob on exit door
- Rooms 10 & 12, Second means of egress obstructed
- Ceiling tile in boys' restroom 5th and 6th grade hall
- Missing exterior light north end 5th and 6th grade hall
- Unprotected exterior lights main building
- Unprotected lights in Kindergarten girls' and boys' restroom
- Chain and pad lock on exit door activity building
- No two way communication
- No light exit signs
- Emergency lights were inoperable
- Windows do not meet life safety codes for 2nd means of egress
- No main utility cut off map in main office
- Main utility cut offs not labeled

Greenwood Middle School

- No fire extinguisher in library
- Curtains over second means of egress 7th grade hall
- No second means of egress in 7th and 8th grade computer lab
- Inoperable exit lights end of 7th grade hall
- Room 147 & 163, No second means of egress
- Doors lock with key only
- Room 202, no second means of egress
- No main utility cut off map in main office
- Main utility cut offs not labeled
- 9 ceiling tiles missing in book room
- Rooms 207 & 195, no second means of egress
- Electrical outlet cover missing on stage
- Unprotected light in boys' dressing room
- No type K fire extinguisher

Greenwood High School

- Utility cut offs not labeled
- Utility cut offs map not posted in the main office
- Emergency lights were inoperable
- Cafeteria staff no fire safety training
- Unprotected lights in hall way outside girls dressing room
- Exit lights in gym lobby inoperable
- Door closures in gym lobby missing
- Slide bolt on exit door in auditorium
- Building E, Lighted exit lights were inoperable
- Most rooms did not have evacuation maps
- Windows do not meet life safety codes for 2nd means of egress
- No second means of egress were labeled

- No two way communication with the classrooms
- Power strip plugged into power strip Computer room, library
- Building E, Missing door closure missing on exit door
- Unprotected lights in dry storage in cafeteria
- Broken drain pipe outside back door of cafeteria
- Expose wires in electrical panel in boiler room
- Building B, Unprotected lights in home economics room, girls' rest room
- Leaking roof in home economics room
- Missing ceiling tile in main hall
- Unprotected lights in all girls' restrooms
- Poor signage for identifying office
- Hall B, Unprotected lights
- Unprotected lights in main hall
- Extension cord being use as a permanent source of power in library
- Restrooms are not handicap accessible
- No inventory of chemicals in science room
- No material safety data sheets
- Exterior electrical panels not secured
- Room 301, Electrical outlet plate missing
- ROTC room missing electrical outlet plats
- Exit signs and emergency lighting inoperable

Vocational Building

- Power strips plugged into power strips in computer room
- Emergency light/exit signs inoperable
- Several roof leaks evident
- Walk ways flood

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

- Label and identify utilities cut offs on a map posted in the office
- Provide a second means of egress in all classrooms
- Replace or repair east exit doors on A, B, C halls Greenwood High that would remain locked on the out side
- Label all second means of egress
- Repair or replace exit signs with ones that are lighted
- Repair or replace inoperable emergency lighting
- Replace windows that do not meet life safety codes as a second means of egress
- Provide a two way communication for all classrooms
- Provide protection for all unprotected lights
- Provide fire safety training for all cafeteria workers
- Add K type fire extinguishers in kitchens that do not have one
- Post capacity signs in all cafeteria dining rooms, auditoriums, and gyms
- Correct all other violations not specifically mention above

GREENWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT (4220)
History of Performance

	2009	At Risk of Failing	High Performing	At Risk of Failing	At Risk of Failing	Academic Watch	At Risk of Failing	Academic Watch
Performance Classification	2010	Successful	Star School	Academic Watch	Academic Watch	Successful	At Risk of Failing	Academic Watch
	2011	Successful	High Performing	Academic Watch	Successful	Successful	Academic Watch	Low Performing
	2012	C - Successful	B - High Performing	B - High Performing	D - Academic Watch	C - Successful	C - Successful	F - Low Performing
	2013	D	A	C	F	C	D	C
	2009	118	173	100	125	122	101	114
QDI	2010	133	201	117	161	140	104	123
	2011	145	197	137	171	144	132	124
	2012	149	191	168	137	146	152	125
	2013	156	202	166	132	155	150	150
	2009	NOT MET	MET	NOT MET	NOT MET	MET	NOT MET	MET
Growth	2010	MET	MET	MET	NOT MET	MET	NOT MET	MET
	2011	MET	MET	NOT MET	MET	MET	MET	NOT MET
	2012	MET	MET	MET	NOT MET	MET	MET	NOT MET
	2013	NOT MET	MET	NOT MET	NOT MET	MET	MET	NOT MET
	2009	64			64			
Graduation Rates (5-Year)	2010	65.5			65.5			
	2011	52.2			52.2			
	2012	66.6			66.6			
	2013	67.4			67.4			

**Mississippi Department of Education
Consolidated Federal Programs Investigative Audit Report
Greenwood Public School District
Period Investigated: FY14
Dates of Investigation: May 19-20, 2014**

The objective of the investigative audit was to determine whether Greenwood Public School District had adequate fiscal and programmatic controls over the use of funds for grants authorized under the *Elementary Secondary Education Act of 1965* including ensuring compliance with regulations regarding the implementation of program requirements and expenditure of funds. The audit covered Greenwood Public School District's system of internal controls, programmatic and fiscal compliance for the current school year 2013-2014 (FY14). *Note: For the current school year, 2013-2014, programmatic and fiscal documentation and expenditures dated prior to May 19, 2014 were reviewed for compliance.*

All findings described in this report are based on the analysis of data collected during the on-site evaluation, including (a) interviews conducted with district staff, (b) observations of instructional programs and staff, (c) analysis of official documentation on file in the district, (d) analysis of official reports submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), and (e) completed evaluation forms. The citations, corrective actions, and/or recommendations for continued compliance are listed below.

1. **Compliance Indicator A1: Is it evident that budgets and expenditures for all federal programs are:**
 - a. Allocable
 - b. Reasonable and necessary
 - c. Meeting program intent and purposes
 - d. Aligned with the approved application and amendments on file at MDE
 - e. Obligated and liquidated in accordance with the approved plan within the approved grant period

OMB Circular A-87; 34 CFR 80.20(b)(4) and 80.30

Citation (1): During a review of the LEA's *Expenditure Budget-Supporting Activity* report for FY14, it was noted the Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A budgets were not aligned with the approved MDE *CFPA (Consolidated Federal Programs Application)* budget. The following items were identified in the charts below:

FY14 Title I-2211		
Location	MDE approved CFPA Budget	LEA Marathon Budget
District Total Allocation	\$2,728,746.00	\$2,515,030.00
Central Office	\$833,261.00	\$546,122.00
Bankston Elementary	\$190,707.00	\$196,313.00
Threadgill Elementary	\$416,729.00	\$464,759.00

Davis Elementary	\$336,209.00	\$355,429.00
FY14 Title II-2511		
Location	MDE approved CFPA Budget	LEA Marathon Budget
District Total Allocation	\$326,606.00	\$360,473.42
Central Office	\$153,590.85	\$64,307.27
Davis Elementary	\$45,740.00	\$46,940.00
Bankston Elementary	-0-	\$78,440.00
W. C. Williams Elementary	-0-	\$44,060.00
St. Frances (private school)	\$853.00	\$304.00

Citation (2): A review of the LEA's FY14 *Expenditure Budget-Supporting Activity* report for Title I, Part A and Title II, Part A revealed the LEA expended funds outside of the approved MDE budgets as denoted in the charts below:

FY14 Title I-2211 Expenditures				
Function/Location	Object	Approved Budget	Expended	Notes
3900—Bankston Elementary	600-699	-0-	\$81.14	Amount of \$81.14 is questioned cost because it was not in approved MDE budget.
2210—Threadgill Elementary	200-299	-0-	\$5,410.82	Amount of \$5,410.82 is questioned cost because it was not in approved MDE budget.
2210—Davis Elementary	200-299	-0-	\$5,147.70	Amount of \$5,147.70 is questioned cost because it was not in approved MDE budget.
2210—Davis Elementary	600-699	-0-	\$250.00	Amount of \$250.00 is questioned cost because it was not in approved MDE budget. Additionally, there was not a listing of items purchased on PO # 63576 reflecting what items were purchased.
3900—Williams Elementary	600-699	-0-	\$249.64	Amount of \$249.64 is questioned cost because it was not in approved MDE budget. Additionally, there was not a listing of items purchased on PO # 63562 reflecting what items were purchased.

2225— Greenwood Middle School	600-699	-0-	\$321.60	Amount of \$321.60 is questioned cost because it was not in approved MDE budget.
3900—Central Office	200-299	\$6,078	\$18,689.21	Amount of \$12,611.21 is questioned cost because the expenditure exceeded 10% of the function total. In addition, the LEA could not provide names of persons receiving benefits expended for social security and retirement contributions in the amounts of \$3,031.86 and \$6,242.10, respectively.
FY14 Title II-2511 Expenditures				
Function/Location	Object	Approved Budget	Expended	Notes
1120—Bankston Elementary	200-299	-0-	\$9,932.77	Amendment was required because no funds were budgeted at this school. Questioned costs are \$9,932.77.
W. C. Williams Elementary	200-299	-0-	\$96.77	Amendment was required because no funds were budgeted at this school. Questioned costs are \$96.77.

Corrective Action Required for Citations (1 and 2): The Financial Administration section of 34 *CFR* 80.20(b)(4) states, "Actual expenditures or outlays must be compared with budgeted amounts for each grant or subgrant." *OMB Circular A-87* requires "the efficient and effective administration of Federal awards through the application of sound management practices." In order to fulfill these requirements, the LEA must align its accounting system with all current approved MDE budgets for all of its federal programs. Copies of the LEA's current Expenditure Budget Report by site for all programs must be submitted to the MDE.

Additionally, the LEA must execute and submit to the MDE copies of correcting journal entries reimbursing its FY14 Title I, Part A and FY14 Title II, Part A programs for questioned costs in the amounts of \$24,072.11 and \$10,029.54, respectively.

Citation (3): A review of the LEA's purchasing records relative to parental involvement funds revealed funds were not distributed to the Title I schools. The following was identified:

FY14 Title I-2211 Parental Involvement Expenditures			
Purchase Order #	Payee/Purpose	Expended	Notes
63651	Market Place Refreshments for PTO	\$163.55	Parental involvement funds cannot be used to purchase refreshments for PTO meetings, which do not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Also, PO #63651 had no supporting documentation such as agenda, sign-in sheets or minutes. Questioned costs are \$163.55.
63720	Upchurch Rental LLC Inflatables for Celebration	\$1,000.00	Inflatables are not an allowable cost for parental involvement funds. This purchase does not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Questioned costs are \$1,000.00.
63756	Charles Hall Studio Microphones, music mixers, speakers, speaker cables, boom mic stands, stage monitors	\$4,661.00	The purchase of sound equipment does not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Also, these items were coded as supplies and should have been coded as equipment so they would be accounted for in the LEA's fixed asset records. The audit team did not see these items during the inventory it conducted. Questioned costs are \$4,661.00.
63762 and 63775	Walmart Parent Outreach at the Park	Unable to determine because records did not contain a ledger tracking the charges to each open PO. Also, checks for payment to the vendor were not included with documentation.	Parental involvement funds cannot be used to hold an open account at Wal-Mart. Also, items purchased as identified in vendor receipt do not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Documentation must be submitted to OFP in order to determine the amount of questioned costs to be reimbursed to program.

63776	Walmart Winter Parent Outreach Festival	Checks for payment to the vendor were not included with documentation.	Parental involvement funds cannot be used to hold an open account at Wal-Mart. Also, items purchased as identified in vendor receipt do not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Documentation must be submitted to OFP in order to determine the amount of questioned costs to be reimbursed to program.
63774 and 65762	?	?	These PO numbers were handwritten on Walmart receipt dated 12/20/13 totaling \$1,695.51. There was no documentation supporting these POs. Documentation must be submitted to OFP in order to determine if charges to program were allowable.
63765	Dawkins Office Supply Black binders, portable file boxes, and slanted ring view binders	\$277.11	Requisition did not describe purpose of items purchased in order to determine if expenditure fulfilled the purpose of Section 1118. Questioned costs are \$277.11.
63766	Coole School Primary, Elementary and Secondary planners, imprint, and Coole Kid folders	\$5,653.33	Expenditure does not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Questioned costs are \$5,653.33.
63767	WABG TV GPSD Advertisement/Parental Involvement	\$1,030.00	Expenditure does not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Questioned costs are \$1,030.00.
63768	Brewer Screen Printing 200 printed "T" shirts	\$1,600.00	Expenditure does not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Questioned costs are \$1,600.00.
63769	Crestline Specialties Co., Inc.	\$2,032.69	Expenditure does not fulfil the purpose of Section

	Promotional cups and Earth Friendly Journals		1118. Questioned costs are \$2,032.69.
63807	Cresline Specialties Co., Inc. Pens, Color Setup Charges, Earth Friendly Journals, Thirst Buster Travel Cups, and Express Tumblers	\$4,384.03	Expenditure does not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Questioned costs are \$4,384.03.
63778	Dawkins Supply Parental Outreach Decorations \$5,791.01 invoice #0397648-001 paid 12/20/13 Invoice #0396199-001 reflecting PO #63778 in the amount of \$815.99 for Screen, Portable, Proj, 60IN Auditors did not locate this equipment nor was it on the inventory report.	\$5,791.01 \$814.24	Expenditures do not fulfil the purpose of Section 1118. Also, PO is marked with message, "this is an open PO," which is not allowable practice for parental involvement funds. Questioned costs are \$5,791.01 and \$814.24. Note: From documentation submitted, Dawkins Office Supply invoiced the LEA twice on the same purchase order (63778). The charge for \$814.24 will not be considered a questioned cost if the LEA declined the charge and determined it to be an error.

Corrective Action Required for Citation (3): According to *Section 1118(a)(3)(A)*, an LEA that receives a Title I, Part A allocation of greater than \$500,000 must reserve not less than one percent of its Title I, Part A allocation to carry out the provisions of section 1118, including promoting family literacy and parenting skills. The LEA then must distribute at least 95 percent to its schools, leaving the balance of the reserved funds the LEA may use for parental involvement activities at the LEA level.

The LEA must submit documentation to the MDE in order to determine the amount of questioned costs to be reimbursed to program for purchase order numbers 63762, 63775, 63776, 63774, and 65762. Furthermore, the LEA must execute and submit to the MDE copies of correcting journal entries reimbursing its FY14 Title I, Part A program for questioned costs in the amount of \$27,406.96.

Citation (4): While conducting a fixed asset audit at Greenwood High School, the inventory clerk at the school was unable to locate 30 iPads that were acquired on January 16, 2014. The items were eventually located in the vault inside the inventory clerk's office in the original shipping box. The District Technician stated teachers will check-out iPads on a daily basis for them to interface with classroom technology.

Corrective Action Required for Citation (4): The purchase of equipment for the activity described above is an allowable Title I expenditure. However, the expenditure is not considered to be allocable, reasonable, or necessary and is questionable because the items were acquired on January 16, 2014 and not placed in use as of the date of this audit. An amount of \$22,434.00 is questioned costs and must be reimbursed to the Title I, Part A program. The LEA must execute correcting journal entries reimbursing its Title I, Part A program for questioned costs in the amount of \$22,434.00 and submit copies of the same to the MDE.

Citation (5): While conducting a fixed asset audit at Central Office, it was noted that one Mondo Pad bearing asset #12262 was located in the Board Room. This was not considered necessary or allocable under the Title I, Part A program.

Corrective Action Required for Citation (5): The LEA must move the Mondo Pad to one of its Title I schools or reimburse its Title I, Part A program for questioned costs in the amount of \$9,300.00. Documentation satisfying this corrective action must be submitted to the MDE.

2. **Compliance Indicator A7:** After pulling a sample of items from the fixed asset records, is there evidence that the items sampled can be located and the location is consistent as indicated? *34 CFR Section 80.32; MS Public School Asset Management Manual*

Citation: An inventory of fixed assets purchased with federal funds revealed the following deficiencies outlined in the chart below:

Assigned Location	Fixed Asset/No.	Deficiency
Greenwood High School Library	Laptop #12230 Laptop #12234 Laptop #12235	These three laptops were signed back in to the Library but were not located in the laptop cart. Before leaving the school, the items were located. It was determined the laptops were not signed back out when taken from the Library.
Greenwood High School Library	Laptop #12227 Laptop #12236	These laptops were not located in the Library laptop cart. The Laptop Check in/Out sheet did not indicate if these laptops were checked out. Questioned cost is \$2,040.00 if laptops are not located.
Central Office	Mondo Pad #12262	This Mondo Pad was replaced by the vendor and assumed the old asset number. However,

		the asset number 12263 reflected on the fixed asset report for this Mondo Pad belonged to a SPED funded Smart Table at Threadgill and should not have been on the Title I report. Both assets were located.
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Corrective Action Required: The LEA must strengthen its internal controls over fixed assets to adhere to the requirements identified in the *MS Public School Asset Management Manual*. It should be the responsibility of the Fixed Assets Coordinator to conduct the annual inventory of fixed assets at the end of the school year by implementing the following procedures prescribed in the *MS Public School Asset Management Manual*:

- a. Each department head is furnished with an inventory for that specific department.
- b. Each department head checks off each item of equipment in his department that has been verified.
- c. The department head returns the completed forms to the Property Manager or person responsible for the inventory.
- d. The inventory is then reconciled to the existing inventory records and any differences are investigated. Necessary adjustments are made to the inventory records.
- e. The Fixed Assets Subsidiary Ledger is prepared from the adjusted records.

An immediate inventory of fixed assets must be conducted in accordance with the above requirements to verify the existence, location, and condition of fixed assets, and to reconcile fixed asset records. Documentation of the required inventory must be submitted to the MDE by the end of July 2014.

Additionally, the LEA must locate the two missing laptops and provide supporting documentation to the MDE. In the event the laptops are not located, the LEA must execute correcting journal entries reimbursing its Title I, Part A program for questioned costs in the amount of \$2,040.00 for the two laptops and submit copies of the same to the MDE.

3. Compliance Indicator H30: Does the grantee maintain:

- a. Organizational chart listing all personnel
- b. Written job description for each employee for the 21st Century program
- c. Certifications and qualifications for all key staff

Section 4204(b)(2)(N)

Citation: The LEA was unable to provide a current personnel listing. The team was not able to determine if there were adequate personnel in place. In addition, the team could not verify if paid personnel were included in the approved application.

Corrective Action Required: The LEA must provide a current personnel listing that lists 21st Century employees by site and includes job descriptions for each employee.

MISSISSIPPI

PUBLIC SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS

2012



MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ensuring a bright future for every child

July 30, 2013

EXHIBIT

B

5.0 ACCREDITATION MONITORING PROCEDURES

Staff in the Mississippi Department of Education continuously monitor school districts to verify compliance with applicable accreditation requirements and state and federal laws.

5.1 ON-SITE EVALUATIONS

The State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Education, or the Commission on School Accreditation has the authority to call for an on-site evaluation or investigation of a school district at any time. If deficiencies are found in meeting accreditation standards or state and federal laws, the superintendent is notified in writing and given thirty (30) days from the receipt of notification to provide a written response. The report of findings is filed in the current accreditation records in the Office of Accreditation.

5.2 INVESTIGATIVE EVALUATIONS (COMPLAINTS AGAINST DISTRICTS)

All formal complaints made against schools or districts must be submitted to the Office of Accreditation in writing and bear the signature of the individual(s) filing the complaint. The written complaint shall contain specific details concerning alleged violations. When the complaint is received, the superintendent is notified in writing of the nature of the complaint and informed that the district is subject to an unannounced audit to investigate the allegations.

5.2.1 Areas Over Which the Commission Has No Authority

If the complaint addresses an area over which the Commission has no authority, the individual filing the complaint is acknowledged and the complaint is filed in the Office of Accreditation.

5.2.2 Areas Over Which the Commission Does Have Authority

If the complaint addresses an area over which the Commission does have authority, the superintendent may be notified in writing of the nature of the complaint and given thirty (30) days to provide a written response to the allegations and to present documentation of compliance. The superintendent may also be notified that the district is subject to an unannounced audit to investigate the allegations.

5.2.2.1 If the deficiencies are found in meeting accreditation standards or state and federal laws, a report of findings is filed in the current accreditation records in the Office of Accreditation and the complainant will be notified of the findings.

5.2.2.2 If no deficiencies are found in meeting accreditation standards or state and federal laws, the district and the complainant will be notified.

5.2.3 Unannounced On-Site Investigative Evaluations

The State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Education, or the Commission on School Accreditation has the authority to call for an on-site evaluation or investigation of a school district at any time. Procedures for conducting investigative audits are as follows:

5.2.3.1 The auditors may arrive in the district without prior notification.

5.2.3.2 The auditor(s) inform the superintendent of the purpose of the audit and of the procedures to be followed.

5.2.3.3 The auditor(s) discuss procedures with the principal of the school if appropriate.

5.2.3.4 The auditor(s) use various methods to collect the data needed to verify or discredit the complaint, including examination of official records, interviews with school personnel, and observations.

5.6 ANALYSIS AND VERIFICATION OF ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

Accreditation staff in the Mississippi Department of Education review annual personnel/accreditation information and other annual reports submitted by school districts. Staff will analyze and compare this information with any other accreditation data on record and notify responsible officials of any inconsistency in reporting or any apparent deficiency in meeting standards. Any information submitted by a school district may be verified through on-site visits. Upon request the school district must provide documentation necessary to validate compliance with accreditation requirements.

6.0 HEARING AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

All controversies involving the accreditation of schools or school districts are initially heard by a duly authorized representative of the Commission before whom a complete record is made.

6.1 REQUEST FOR HEARING

The school board of a school district may request a hearing by filing written notice with the executive secretary of the Commission on School Accreditation within ten (10) calendar days of the written notification of the recommended Commission action.

6.2 AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMISSION

Upon receipt of the written request for hearing, the chairman of the Commission assigns, in writing, a duly authorized representative previously appointed by the Commission to hear the controversy.

6.3 HEARING PROCEDURES

6.3.1 The Commission's representative sets the time, place, and date for a hearing and notifies all parties of the time, place, and date of the hearing by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested. All parties may be represented by counsel at the expense of the party. The hearing is conducted in such a manner as to afford all parties a fair and reasonable opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence pertinent to the issues and to cross-examine witnesses presented by the opposing party. The Commission's representative may permit any portion of the evidence to be submitted in the form of depositions or affidavits; and in case affidavits are received, an opportunity to present counter-affidavits is provided.

6.3.2 It is the responsibility of each party at the hearing to secure the attendance of such witness or witnesses as the party deems necessary or appropriate, and any expense connected with the attendance of such witnesses is borne by the party responsible for the attendance of the witness.

6.3.3 In conducting the hearing, the Commission's representative is not bound by common law or by statutory rules of evidence or by technical or formal rules of procedure, provided, however, hearsay evidence, if admitted, is not the sole basis for the determination of facts by the Commission's representative.

6.3.4 After presentation by the executive secretary of the Commission regarding recommended action and policy in support thereof, the party filing the written notice of hearing has the burden of going forward with the evidence, and at the conclusion of the hearing, the Commission's representative grants any party the opportunity to present a statement in such party's own behalf, either in person or by such party's attorney.

6.3.5 All hearings held before the Commission's representative are recorded and transcribed by a court reporter whose fees and costs of transcription are paid by the school district involved within forty-five (45) days after having been notified of such costs and fees by the Commission. Within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the transcribed record of the hearing, the Commission's representative files a written recommendation to the Commission as to the resolution of the controversies. Upon consideration of the transcribed record and recommendation of its representative, the Commission makes its decision

**BEFORE THE COMMISSION ON SCHOOL ACCREDITATION
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HINDS COUNTY OF MISSISSIPPI**

**OFFICE OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
AND OFFICE OF ACCREDITATION AND
ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

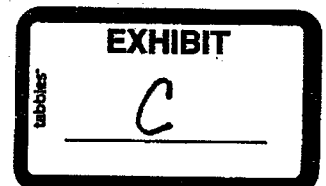
VS.

**GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT;
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS FOR THE
GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT;
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE GREENWOOD
PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT; ALL STAKE-
HOLDERS OF THE GREENWOOD PUBLIC
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**PETITION FOR CONTINUANCE OF SCHEDULED HEARING,
FOR FULL HEARING ON THE MERITS, AND FOR OTHER RELIEF**

COMES NOW Petitioners Dr. Montrell Greene, Superintendent of Schools for the Greenwood Public School District, Board of Trustees of the Greenwood Public School District, and All Stakeholders of the Greenwood Public School District, pursuant to Mississippi Code Ann. §37-17-5 and other applicable statutes and the Accreditation Policies as published in the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*, files this their Petition for Continuance of Scheduled Hearing, for Full Hearing, and for Other Relief, and would respectfully show unto the Commission as follows:

1. That the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) conducted an unannounced evaluation of the Greenwood Public School District to assess the district's compliance with accreditation standards beginning on or about April 29, 2014.



2. On July 16, 2014, the Greenwood Public School District received a cover letter (2 pages) and those certain anticipated Mississippi Department of Education audit results, which comprised of a 46-page report that explained that the district appeared to be in violation of Accreditation Policy 2.1 and approximately 22 process standards.

3. The MDE's audit report explained that "All findings described in the enclosed report are based on the analysis of data collected during the onsite evaluation, including (a) interviews conducted with district staff, (b) observations and completed evaluation forms, (c) surveys completed by district staff, (d) analysis of official documentation on file in the district, and (e) analysis of official reports submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education."

4. MDE concluded, "The district's violation of the 22 Accreditation standards, Accreditation Policy 2.1, and state and federal law as well as the lack of student achievement demonstrate there is a *critical situation existing in the Greenwood Public School District that seriously affects the safety, security, and the educational interests of the children enrolled*. This condition must be addressed and corrected, or the school district will continue to suffer the consequences that prohibit the development of a safe, orderly, and healthy school climate that focuses an increased student achievement." (Emphasis added).

5. That MDE's cover letter of its audit report as received by the Greenwood Public School District explained as follows:

In accordance with Section 37-17-6(12) of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, and the Accreditation Policies published in the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2012, a report will be made to the Commission on School Accreditation on Tuesday, July 22, 2014. The Commission meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Fourth Floor Board Room of the Central High School Building in Jackson, Mississippi. The Commission will determine if an extreme emergency situation exists that jeopardizes the safety, security and educational interests of the children in the Greenwood Public School District pursuant to Section 37-17-6(12)(b) of the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended.

The superintendent and the board president will be allowed to address the Commission prior to the Commission's determination. Please limit your comments to fifteen (15) minutes each. If the Commission makes any recommendation(s) at this meeting, the recommendation(s) will be presented to the State Board of Education at its regularly scheduled meeting on July 23, 2014, at 9:00 a.m. in the 4th floor board room of the Central High School Building in Jackson, Mississippi. The State Board of Education will also allow the superintendent and board president the opportunity to make comments.

6. That Superintendent Dr. Montrell Greene, the Board of Trustees for the Greenwood Public School District, and the Greenwood Public School District, including any and all stakeholders, take the findings and/or allegations within MDE's audit report very seriously and strongly feel that the alleged violations can be corrected immediately, have already been corrected, can be corrected in a reasonable time period, or needs to be further discussed with MDE for clarity.

7. That the time period that has been allotted by MDE to the Greenwood Public School District to prepare for the hearing before the Commission on School Accreditation, amounting to 3 ½ business days, and the time period of fifteen (15) minutes allotted to the superintendent and board president to address the Commission concerning MDE's findings within its audit report is unconscionable, insufficient, and unfair for the following reasons:

- (1) MDE has enjoyed the luxury of having over two and a half (2 ½) months to gather its information and prepare its 46-page audit report as compared to the District's three and one half (3 ½) business days to comment and/or respond to the numerous allegations of accreditation violations, especially in consideration that MDE's report, in part, attacks the credibility, governing style, and/or actions of both the superintendent and school board;
- (2) the Greenwood Public School District needs more time than three and one-half (3 ½) business days to study the audit report's findings, to conduct research to verify the report's findings, and prepare its response to MDE's findings, including any supporting documentation, to allow the school district to formulate a substantive response to MDE's findings as articulated in its audit report

- (3) the superintendent and board president need more than fifteen (15) minutes to respond to the numerous allegations as outlined in MDE's 46-page audit report, which alleges the violations of Accreditation Policy 2.1 and 22 Process Standards
- (4) that MDE's audit report has apparently taken as absolute truth any and all Allegations obtained through its "confidential interviews" and "evaluation forms" that resulted in the audit report's attack on the credibility, governing style, and/or actions of both the superintendent and school board; and consequently, as a matter of fairness, due process and/or other legal and/or procedural safeguards, both the superintendent and school board should have the right to confront and/or evaluate any and all interviewees, statements, and any other documentation supporting MDE's findings, which to date, the district has not been afforded the opportunity to do so

8. That any such hearing of the Greenwood Public School District before the Commission on School Accreditation amounts to a "hearing by ambush," as it does not provide the school district with adequate due process and further fails to provide the Greenwood Public School District with an adequate opportunity to (1) review and evaluate the report, (2) to conduct research to verify the report's findings, (3) prepare its response to MDE's findings, including securing any documentation and/or witnesses in support of its position that many of MDE's finding are untrue, unsubstantiated, and/or one-sided, (4) to ultimately allow the school district to formulate a substantive response to MDE's findings as articulated in MDE's audit report, and (5) providing the Commission, and/or its designee, with a balanced overview of facts, circumstances, and documentation to accurately assess the condition of the Greenwood Public School District.

9. That Mississippi Code Annotated §37-17-5 states as follows:

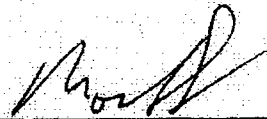
It shall be the purpose of the Commission on School Accreditation to continually review the standards on accreditation and the enforcement thereof and to make recommendations thereon to the State Board of Education. All controversies involving the accreditation of schools shall be initially heard by a duly authorized representative of the commission before whom *a complete record shall be made...* (Emphasis added).

10. That the Greenwood Public School District adamantly believes that a full hearing is necessary to protect its rights of due process, and as a matter of fairness, to achieve the purposes of §37-17-5 of establishing a "complete record," that no such "complete record" could be established without affording the Greenwood Public School District an opportunity to put forth on record any and all evidence, including but not limited to, witnesses, experts, and any and all documentation to dispute those allegations as set forth in MDE's audit report.

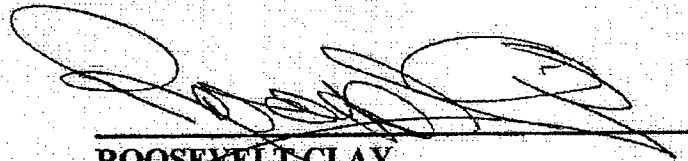
11. That, in order to facilitate Greenwood Public School District's efforts to come into compliance with MDE's Accreditation Policy and Process Standards that MDE has set forth as not being followed by the school district pursuant to its audit report, the Greenwood Public School District requests that MDE officials review its audit report formally with district officials to provide them with clarity, support, and guidance regarding MDE's findings and answer any questions that district officials may have regarding those findings as articulated in its audit report. No such support from MDE has been offered or rendered to Greenwood Public School District to date.

WHEREFORE, PREMISES CONSIDERED, Petitioners pray for this Commission to (1) postpone the hearing of the Greenwood Public School District before the Commission on School Accreditation as scheduled for Tuesday, July 22, 2014, (2) allow the Greenwood Public School District as much time, as was allowed for MDE to prepare its report, for the Greenwood Public School District to prepare itself for any prospectively set hearing before the Commission, and (3) allow the superintendent and board president of the Greenwood Public School District

more than fifteen minutes to address the Commission, if the superintendent and board president deem the usage of said time necessary and appropriate, and (4) advise MDE officials review its audit report formally with district officials to provide them with clarity, support, and guidance regarding MDE's findings and answer any questions that district officials may have regarding those findings as articulated in its audit report. Petitioners further pray for any other general or equitable relief that they may be entitled.



DR. MONTRELL GREENE
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT



ROOSEVELT CLAY
PRESIDENT, BOARD OF TRUSTEES
GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT



BY:

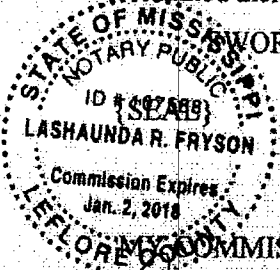
Carlos D. Palmer, MSB#100778
Board Attorney for the Greenwood Public School District
Palmer Law Services, LLC
104 West Market Street
P. O. Box 272
Greenwood, Mississippi 38935-0272
Phone: (662) 459-9111/ Fax: (662) 459-9115
Email: carlosdpalmer@yahoo.com

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

COUNTY OF LEFLORE

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority at law in and for that State and County aforesaid, the within named DR. MONTRELL GREENE, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, who, after having been by me first duly sworn, stated under oath that he signed and executed the above and foregoing Petition and that all matters, facts and allegations, and things contained therein are true and correct as therein stated.

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me, this, the 18th day of July, 2014



Lashaunda Fryson
NOTARY PUBLIC

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES:

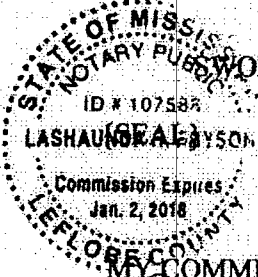
January 2, 2018

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

COUNTY OF LEFLORE

Personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority at law in and for that State and County aforesaid, the within named ROOSEVELT CLAY, BOARD PRESIDENT, who, after having been by me first duly sworn, stated under oath that he signed and executed the above and foregoing Petition and that all matters, facts and allegations, and things contained therein are true and correct as therein stated.

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me, this, the 18th day of July, 2014



Lashaunda Fryson
NOTARY PUBLIC

MY COMMISSION EXPIRES:

January 2, 2018

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF LEFLORE

I, Carlos D. Palmer, do hereby certify that I have this day caused to be faxed, and mailed via U. S. Mail, postage prepaid, a true and correct copy of the foregoing Petition for Continuance of Scheduled Hearing, for Full Hearing, and Other Relief to:

Dr. Carey Wright
State Superintendent of Education
Mississippi Department of Education
359 North West
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dr. Paula A. Vanderford
Executive Secretary, Commission on School Accreditation
Mississippi Department of Education
359 North West
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Pat Ross
Chief School Performance Officer
Mississippi Department of Education
359 North West
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dr. Montrell Greene, Superintendent
Greenwood Public School District
401 Howard Street
Post Office Box 1497
Greenwood, MS 38930

Mr. Roosevelt Clay, Board President
Greenwood Public School District
401 Howard Street
Post Office Box 1497
Greenwood, MS 38930

This the 18th of July, 2014



CARLOS D. PALMER



CARLOS D. PALMER
Attorney-at-Law
Palmer Law, Sports, & Career Placement Services, LLC
104 West Market Street, P. O. Box 272, Greenwood, MS 38930
Phone: (662) 459-9111 / Fax: (662) 459-9115



July 18, 2014

Dr. Paula A. Vanderford, Executive Secretary
Commission on School Accreditation
Mississippi Department of Education
359 North West
P. O. Box 771
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

FAXED & MAILED
(601) 359-1979

RE: Public Records Request concerning MDE's April 29, 2014 Audit Report of GPSD.

Dear Dr. Vanderford or MDE Designee:

On behalf of the Greenwood Public School District (GPSD), please provide my office with a copy of any and all of the following documentation concerning and supporting the findings of the Mississippi Department of Education's Accreditation Audit of the Greenwood Public School District dated April 29, 2014:

Any and all writings, drawings, recordings, graphs, charts, warrants, records or serial numbers, photographs, phonographs, books of accounts, books of records, bookkeeping records, ledgers, transcripts, and any other compilations concerning (a) interviews conducted with district staff of GPSD, (b) observations and completed evaluation forms, (c) surveys completed by district staff of GPSD, (d) official documentation on file in the district, and (e) official reports submitted to the Mississippi Department of Education.

This request is made pursuant to Mississippi Code Annotated §25-61-1 *et. seq.* as known as the "Mississippi Public Records Act." Said documents may either be faxed to the fax number above or mailed to the address above.

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your immediate attention and consideration in this matter.

With kindest regards, I am.

Sincerely,

Carlos D. Palmer
Attorney-at-Law

cc: Dr. Montrell Greene, Superintendent of GPSD
Mr. Roosevelt Clay, Board President of GPSD