

# VOL. 1 | FEBRUARY 2021

# IN THE LOOP

with  
the  
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group LLC



Updates for Mississippi Schools



## Where Do We Go From Here? And HOW?

by Ms. Sondra Caillavet, and Ms. Donna Diaz

With the challenges like virtual and distance learning, hurricanes, and quarantines lingering from the first semester, we find ourselves asking "Where do we go from here? And How?" However, we can all be confident we are better prepared to handle these new challenges much better than we were a year ago!

From **HERE** teams of educators have to work together to:

- Ensure standards are covered before MAAP testing begins
- Design content that contains the most critical content aligned to the standards most essential for success
- Focus remediation efforts on these most critical topics

**HOW** do we begin:

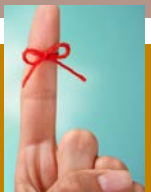
- Grades 3-8 should be shoring up the required Performance Task and the MS CCRS standards encompassed in the task as this piece alone counts for 30% to 40% of the student's overall score
- Consider moving standards linked to the performance task to Term 1 and 2 so they can be continually revisited



## In This Issue

- Where Do We Go From Here? And HOW?
- Why hold BOOTCAMPs for the ACT
- ALL Things Special Education
- Important Reminders and deadlines
- Retirement Announcement from The Excellence Group

## Important Reminders and Deadlines



### ACT- Last chance for Seniors FEBRUARY 2021

Enter scores into MSIS as soon as received to maximize performance score

Junior waivers and accommodations must be done prior to FEB test

Graduation Rates must be verified for the prior year after MDE sends documentation to districts in DEC.

DATA for SPED, Graduation status, MSIS 3 year Cohort should be verified by checking entries and withdrawals and cumulative records for accuracy to ensure graduation rates are calculated correctly

FEB 5, 2021 registration closes for the Annual Collaborative Fiscal Conference on FEB 22-24, 2021 hosted by MDE

DUE MARCH 26 - Educable Child Reimbursement to Sharepoint for JAN 19-Mar 19



# Why Hold **BOOTCAMP** for the ACT?

By Ms. Adelia Wright, Ms. Cristie Hooker, and Dr. Cindy Morgan

by Ms. Phylis Campbell and Ms. April Rice

- B** Because students **FORGET**, we need a cumulative review
- O** Organization (10-20%), strategy (15%-20%), and style (15-20%) aspect of the **ENGLISH** section required students to comprehend the passage as a whole and maximize the passage's organization for clarity; strategies for this section cover all Rhetorical Skills necessary for success
- O** Offers a multiplicity of strategies for attacking difficult questions
- T** Time passes quickly; 45 min. to answer 75 ENGLISH questions = 36 seconds per question; 35 min. to answer 40 READING questions from 4 college level texts
- C** Categories of the **READING** section: Key Ideas and Details (55-60%), Craft and Structure (25-30%), and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (13%-18%)
- A** ACT determines placement in initial college classes AND a myriad of scholarship opportunities
- M** Mechanics and Usage in English include punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure with grammar and usage having a subset weight of 15-20%
- P** Punctuation alone has a subset weight of 10-15%; MS-CCRS do **NOT** stress these skills



Did you know that spending extra instructional time on use of a graphing calculator can assist students significantly on the ACT?  
 Do your students know all they need to about this important tool?  
 The benefits on the **ALGEBRA 1** test are also **HUGE!**

## Budgets

- It is time to start planning the FY22 budget (RFP's, personnel, LRE, etc.)
- This is a good time of year to determine staff training needs for next year as budget planning begins
- FY19 & FY20 budgets must be allocated by 9.30.21 and spent by 12.2021
- FY19, FY20, FY21, & FY22 budgets open in MCAPS through 12.21. Apply first in first out rule to expend funds
- MDE is tracking budgets in MCAPS, those with large balances could be chosen for monitoring
- The written plan for LEAs that have 25% or more of FY20 funds unused must submit plan to MDE by FEB 21, 2021

## ESY (Extended School Year)

Review ESY Guidance Sheet

- ESY decisions made on/or before 4.15.2021
- Most district begin making decisions after Spring Break
- The IEP page does NOT have to be submitted in ESY packet anymore
- Extenuating circumstances should be considered as a last option and be very few

## MIRC (MS Instructional Resource Center)

- Did you submit requests to MDE for braille and large print textbooks?
- State Law requires students have these materials when school starts



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## **Announces the Retirement of Dr. Charles Harrison and Mr. Raymond Clark**

In 2006, **Dr. Charles Harrison** and two colleagues founded The Excellence Group. His leadership has allowed The Excellence Group to continue to provide outstanding professional development and leadership to Mississippi School Districts.

The Excellence Group extends our most humble gratitude for the leadership, expertise, and dedication, Dr. Harrison has given to Mississippi Schools as a teacher, superintendent, professor, state board member, and advocate for fifty years. Dr. Harrison's leadership put him at the helm of one of the highest performing school districts in the state.

As a lifelong educator, **Mr. Raymond Clark's** impact on Mississippi Schools is immeasurable. As a teacher, coach, and school superintendent his influence has touched many lives. The Excellence Group has had the privilege of harnessing Mr. Clark's love of technology and leadership expertise through his unwavering dedication to implementation of LearnSafe software, geared at providing a safe online environment for MS students.

The Excellence Group wishes Mr. Clark all the best in his retirement .

The Excellence Group will not only miss the educational expertise of these two outstanding educators but also their camaraderie and support.

As we add the leadership role of Mr. Arthur McMillan, who brings his own wealth of knowledge as a former educator and district superintendent, our goal is to continue to provide the outstanding service to MS Schools begun by Dr. Harrison . We look forward to continuing the work and will do so with the same passion and high standards set for us.

