



Mississippi Department of Education

Dr. Hank M. Bounds, State Superintendent of Education

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NEWS RELEASE

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State Superintendent discusses dropout prevention with parents

The 2008 Parent Conversations series wrapped up this week with a third and final open forum with State Superintendent of Education Dr. Hank M. Bounds.

Meeting with parents and community members in Meridian, Vicksburg and Pearl, Dr. Bounds answered questions mostly dealing with local and statewide initiatives aimed at making sure all students receive a diploma.

“Too many of our boys and girls are not crossing the finish line, but one way we can change that is to get invested in their futures as parents and as a community,” Dr. Bounds said. “Our own futures depend on it.”

The series of meetings is part of a larger dropout prevention campaign called “On the Bus,” launched in January 2008. In addition to the Parent Conversations series, On the Bus efforts have included hosting two statewide dropout prevention summits and requiring each school district to develop dropout prevention plans.

The mission of the campaign lines up with one of the Mississippi Board of Education’s three bold goals: Cutting the dropout rate to 13 percent by 2013. The graduation rate for Mississippi’s Class of 2007 was 73.8 percent, while the dropout rate was 15.9 percent. For the Class of 2006, the graduation rate was 70.8 percent, while the dropout rate was 17.6 percent.

“There is still much more work to do, but raising awareness about the issue is such an important step,” said Dr. Sheril Smith, Director of the Mississippi Department of Education’s Office of Dropout Prevention. “We have to recognize and accept that making sure all our students are graduating and prepared to compete in an increasingly global society should be the first priority.”

The On the Bus campaign is funded by State Farm Insurance in cooperation with the Public Education Forum of Mississippi and the Mississippi Department of Education.

“Quality Education for Every Child”

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For more information visit www.OnTheBus.ms.

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Photo attached: Bounds.jpg

Cutline: State Superintendent of Education Dr. Hank M. Bounds speaks to about 50 parents, school and community members in Pearl about the Mississippi Department of Education's efforts to keep students in school. Both the Pearl Public School District and Rankin County School District participated in the event.



Photo attached: Meridian.jpg

Cutline: State Superintendent of Education Dr. Hank M. Bounds watches as parents and other community members sign up to attend the Parent Conversations open forum in Meridian. Both the Meridian School District and the Lauderdale County School District participated in the event.

