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Vicksburg Warren School District Improves to “B” Rating *District Rises Two Grade Levels in State Accountability System*

Vicksburg, Miss. – The Vicksburg Warren School District (VWSD) expects to jump to a “B” rating for its performance in the 2021-22 school year when the Mississippi State Board of Education approves official grades for all Mississippi schools and districts on Thursday, Sept. 29. In 2019, the District earned a rating of “D”. No official grades were given in 2020 or 2021 due to the pandemic.

Mississippi’s schools and districts are graded on an A-F scale. These grades are part of the state’s required accountability system. VWSD’s improved grade is largely due to the progress students made during the 2021-22 school year rebounding after achievement declined in the first year of the pandemic.

“The school board of trustees has, for years, been working to transform the district and to support teaching the skills our students need to be successful in college, career and life,” said VWSD Superintendent Chad Shealy. “I am proud of the effective strategies we have used to engage students and of the hard work our teachers, students, principals, families, staff, and community partners have done to jump two letter grades to a B rating.”

VWSD continues to make decisions based on what is best for students and to transform the district. Recent innovative changes include:

- Expanding our Pre-K program from 4 to 17 classrooms, so that every family has the opportunity to enroll their young children in early education and give their child a head start to learning.
- Building relevancy into our high school models through the creation of the Vicksburg Warren College and Career Academies. This model allows all high school students to understand why they are learning specific skills and how they will apply the skill in the career path of their choice.
- Visioning with students well-beyond their walk across the stage at graduation. Students prepare for the path they want to take after high school - enroll in college, enlist in the military, become employed with industry credentials they earned in high school, or become an entrepreneur.
- Implementing a framework and system of collaboration amongst building leaders and district level administrators to achieve wildly important goals.

- Increasing the number of students who understand how to set, track, and achieve academic and personal goals.
- Forming strategic partnerships with employers, universities and community colleges so our students are better prepared for next steps after graduation.
- Investing \$143 million dollars in important upgrades to our facilities across the district to make buildings safe and to support the great work that was already happening on the inside.

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) emphasizes the importance of looking at the individual components that contribute to school and district grades to get a more complete picture of student achievement, particularly student proficiency levels.

Mississippi's school grading system considers many indicators, including how many students score in the top two levels on the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP) tests for English Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and high school, whether students score the same or higher on state tests each year as new content is introduced, and whether students are graduating within four years of entering the ninth grade. The system also factors in performance on the ACT and advanced high school courses and how well schools are helping English learners and the lowest-achieving students make progress toward proficiency.

To learn more about Mississippi's A-F accountability system, visit mdek12.org.

NOTE: Accountability scores, released to Mississippi school superintendents and some media groups, were embargoed until 11AM on September 27, 2022. Scores will not be official until Thursday, September 29th by vote of the Mississippi Department of Education Board. Data files will not be posted to the MDE website until scores are official.

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