

First Annual Delta Regional Professional Development Initiative at GHEC



A very exciting educational event that encompasses 15 school districts in the Mississippi Delta was held at the Greenville Higher Education Center August 4th and 5th. Coordinator for this initiative is Dr. Ilean Richards, Program Director for Leadership and School Improvement for the Mississippi Center for Education Innovation in Jackson, Mississippi. Entitled the Delta Regional Professional Development Initiative, sponsored by the Mississippi Center for Education Innovation (MCEI), Dr. Richards' goals are to increase student achievement across all curriculum areas by having school leaders and staff to collaboratively identify and examine teaching and learning strategies that have been proven to have positive effects on student learning. The Greenville Higher Education Center welcomed over 1,800 instructors, facilitators, faculty and presenters to their three-story facility, with almost every classroom, lab and conference rooms full to capacity during the two-day event.

The Mississippi Center for Education Innovation will use professional development platforms, such as this initiative throughout the school year to provide school faculty and support staff with opportunities to enhance their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs in order to foster a learning community that positively impacts student learning.

Additionally, in order to support some of MCEI's secondary goals, several strategies will be examined to determine how to better forge partnerships with school families and communities to promote sound financial literacy practices and doable health and wellness goals for children. For example, members of the National Double Dutch League from New York will be working with health and physical education teachers and home school liaisons to develop a plan for using the sport of Double Dutch as a strategy to combat childhood obesity and diabetes. Participants will also be a part of a variety of professional learning activities for the purpose of examining researched-based practices that promote rigorous student academic engagement and relevant applications of learning.

The Greenville Higher Education Center hopes that these meetings will be an annual event for the Greenville educational community.

Dr. Mary Jean Lush, Vice President of Operations and Director of GHEC, noted that "Seeing GHEC being used to its maximum capacity is exciting. We look forward to working with MCEI on future meetings and training sessions and are glad to play a small role in professional development for Delta K-12 educators and administrators."

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