

## Education Achievement Council

### Resolution Adopting a Postsecondary Attainment Goal in Mississippi

#### Year 2030 and 2035 Goal for Impacting Mississippi's Workforce through Educational Attainment

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**Education Achievement Council Members:** Dr. Jay Allen, President, Itawamba Community College (EAC Chair); The Honorable Richard Bennett, Chairman, Mississippi House of Representatives Education Committee; Dr. Jerryl Briggs, President, Mississippi Valley State University; Mr. Chris Burgio, Campus Director, Concorde Career College; Dr. Jason Dean, Chair, Mississippi Board of Education; The Honorable Dennis DeBar, Chairman, Mississippi Senate Education Committee; Mr. Tom Duff, Trustee, Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning; Dr. E. Harold Fisher, Executive Director, Mississippi Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; Dr. Jim Haffey, President, Holmes Community College; Mr. Shane Hooper, Trustee, Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning; The Honorable Briggs Hopson, Chairman, Mississippi Senate Appropriations Committee; The Honorable Mac Huddleston, Chairman, Mississippi House of Representatives Universities and Colleges Committee; Dr. Tyrone Jackson, President, Mississippi Delta Community College; Mr. William LaForge, President, Delta State University; Dr. Andrea Mayfield, Executive Director, Mississippi Community College Board; Mr. Adam Moore, Mississippi Department of Mental Health; Dr. Felecia Nave, President, Alcorn State University; The Honorable Rita Parks, Chairman, Mississippi Senate Universities and Colleges Committee; Mr. John Pigott, Board Member, Mississippi Community College Board; Dr. Alfred Rankins, Jr., Commissioner of Higher Education, Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning; The Honorable John Read, Chairman, Mississippi House of Representatives Appropriations Committee; Ms. Holly Spivey, Office of Governor Tate Reeves; Ms. Cheryl Thurmond, Board Member, Mississippi Community College Board; Mr. Scott Waller, President and Chief Executive Officer, Mississippi Economic Council; and Dr. Carey Wright, State Superintendent, Mississippi Department of Education

**Title:** Ascent to 55%

**Purpose:** Our goal is to strengthen the quality and quantity of Mississippi's workforce by increasing levels of postsecondary educational attainment among working-age adults. Doing this will both improve the lives of individual Mississippians and contribute to Mississippi's current and future economic health.

**Outcome:** By 2030, Mississippi will increase the postsecondary attainment of its workforce to 55%. By 2035, Mississippi will increase the postsecondary attainment of its workforce to 60%

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#### Resolution

WHEREAS: The Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce predicts that, by 2027, 70% of all jobs will require a postsecondary degree or credential; and

WHEREAS: The Southern Regional Education Board *Challenge to Lead* established a goal for states to reach 60% of working-age adults with a postsecondary credential: an associate or bachelor's degree, or a career certificate.; and

WHEREAS: The College Board reports that citizens with postsecondary education lead healthier lifestyles, earn more, pay more in taxes, and are more likely to be employed than those with only a high school diploma; and

WHEREAS: Mississippi's current rate of postsecondary attainment, (a degree, credential or industry certification earned beyond high school) for adults age 25 to 64 is 45.2%, which is lower than the national average of 51.3%; and

WHEREAS: The Education Achievement Council seeks to close achievement gaps and to focus on working-age adults (ages 25 to 64) and on populations traditionally underrepresented in higher education as a result of inequities including but not limited to people of color, adult students, and the economically disadvantaged; and

WHEREAS: Mississippi's postsecondary outcomes are particularly low for African Americans, who earn an associate degree or above at a rate of 26.4%, compared to their White counterparts, who earn an associate degree or above at a rate of 36.4%; and

WHEREAS: The Education Achievement Council is committed to equitable postsecondary outcomes and seeks to close educational equity gaps, where race is no longer a predictor of educational outcomes; and

WHEREAS: The Mississippi Department of Employment Security projects an overall increase in employment growth of 5.2% by 2026, increasing the number of jobs in all industries from 1,153,930 to 1,214,180—for an overall increase of 60,250 jobs; and

WHEREAS: The Education Achievement Council, the stakeholders committed to improving the overall postsecondary attainment rates to meet Mississippi's future workforce needs, is a diverse set of all stakeholder agencies and institutions representing elementary and secondary education, higher education, employers, and industry; and

WHEREAS: Members of the Education Achievement Council are focused on related work within their own organizations and are seeking an increased, coordinated, and unified effort through participation by state leaders; and

WHEREAS: The Education Achievement Council and its workgroups will develop, support, and assess initiatives that strengthen postsecondary policies, practices and programs with a goal to increase the percentage of Mississippi adults who complete a credential of value beyond high school, particularly focused on credentials relevant to Mississippi's current and future economy; and

WHEREAS: The Education Achievement Council taskforce recommends an attainment goal for Mississippi highlighting the imperative to increase the percentage of working-age adults holding a high-value certificate, college degree, or industry-recognized credential to 55% by 2030 and to 60% by 2035 particularly focused on meeting Mississippi's future workforce needs.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that on this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of October in the year 2020, the members of the Mississippi Education Achievement Council endorse the postsecondary attainment goal of 55% by 2030 and 60% by 2035 and call on all leaders in state and local government, business, philanthropy, education, and non-profit organizations to support the effort to expand Mississippi's economy by adopting this goal into their individual strategic plans.