

**Minutes from Listening Session with the Mississippi Department of Education Board
and
Trustees Blakeslee and Robinson; Interim Commissioner Lucas
Friday, February 20, 2009
MDE Board Room**

The following are desired characteristics of Mississippi's next Commissioner of Higher Education as articulated by the Mississippi Department of Education Board

- If you don't send us good teachers and administrators, we won't send you good students.
- We need good teachers and administrators.
- We sink or swim together.
- We must continue to work in collaboration and cooperation.
- We are all part of the pipeline. We have each other's best interests at heart.
- The next Commissioner must help us come together and support pre-K through university.
- The person you choose should have a belief that the person can provide to the public school teachers in the state. Universities have a role to play in assisting public schools.
- We are encouraged by the level of cooperation between MDE and IHL; we must continue upon and expand that cooperation.
- This must become a priority for IHL.
- We appreciate that you are here. We must work together. This is a great signal.
- We are in a crisis situation with the quantity of teachers.
- The next Commissioner must understand the issues of K-12.
- We are clearly dependant on one another and the community college system.
- We are three distinctly different systems, but we must continue to view education as a "seamless system."
- Community College Presidents and IEO's need to be advocates for early childhood education.
- How well we prepare our youngest citizens directly impacts our adults.
- We must think through how we share ideas.
- We must build a good team among the three educational entities.
- The new Commissioner must concentrate on raising salaries for IHL professors.
- The candidate must not give up. The candidate must stay the course.
- MDE is here to work with IHL. We can provide to you any expertise you may need.