

# **NDPS Certification Program Field Project Report**

## **MLI 2016 Dropout Prevention Summit Educating Educators toward Differentiated Education**

Jackson State University  
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## MLI 2016 Dropout Prevention Summit

### Funding Sources

Mississippi Learning Institute - Kellogg Grant

### Project Cost and Budget Narrative

Funding allocated for this project was \$8,450.

Keynote Speaker	\$1,000
Session Speakers	5,000
Facilities Rental	250
Supplies	500
Breakfast	200
Lunch	1,500
<b>Total Estimate</b>	<b>\$8,450</b>

The Mississippi Learning Institute at Jackson State University allocated \$6,000 to pay the keynote speaker and the breakout session speakers for the full-day summit. We were able to secure the keynote speaker, Dr. Addis, for a waived speaker fee and reimbursement for travel expenses. Cost to conduct the one-day summit was kept to a minimum by (a) holding the summit in one of Jackson State University's facilities; (b) securing speakers that waived their service fee or reduced their fees; and (c) purchasing and providing the morning coffee, Danish, muffins and fruit.

Additional costs were incurred from purchasing supplies to give away as gifts to conference attendees and speakers. Two corporate sponsors provided informational inserts and canvas bags. The colored conference programs were designed and printed at the MLI office.

### Scope and Setting

The summit was held June 7th, 2016, the last day educators in the state of Mississippi were required to work before the school year contracts expired. The Mississippi e-Center at Jackson State University was the chosen location for the summit. The MS e-Center@JSU is conveniently located less than five miles from Jackson States University's main campus and has ample parking space.

Five sessions were scheduled due to the time and space allotted for the event by the MS e-Center@JSU. The five sessions and themes consisted of the keynote address (1 hr), changing school climate (1hr 20 min), the panel discussion and open forum luncheon (1hr 15 min), customizable education (1hr 10 min), and differentiated instruction (1hr 5 min). Several of the summit presenters and panelist graciously volunteered their time and would not accept compensation due to their dedication to reducing the dropout rate in the State of Mississippi and the nation. Conference attendees were not charged a fee to attend the conference.

### Staffing Pattern

The summit occurred on the last day the state of Mississippi educators were required to be present at work before the 2015-2016 school year contract ended. The regular functioning of a school day was not affected. Seven Call Me MiSTER volunteers from Jackson State University were utilized. Staff from the Mississippi Learning Institute at Jackson State University presented sessions, spoke as panelists, or attended as conference participants. In addition, MLI@JSU staff members volunteered to assist during the conference by directing participants to their desired locations and/or collecting session evaluations

throughout the day. Stakeholders from the Mississippi State Department of Education, several state school districts, and outside agencies also served as presenters and/or participants.

### **Population Served**

Conference attendees represented a diverse group of professionals, mostly from the public school community. The breakdown of the 167 registrants that attended the conference were:

Administrators: 26  
School Counselors: 7  
Assistant & Support Staff: 4  
Government Agency Staff: 3  
Educators: 28  
Presenters: 7  
Community Stakeholders: 6  
Consultants: 2  
Vendors: 2

- Number of students, subjects, or participants:  
Our panel included three of the session presenters, and one Call Me Mister student (as part of his NDPC/N certification), one high school administrator, and one state government administrator. We had one keynote speaker, three workshop presenters, and 163 conference attendees.
- Participant selection criteria:  
The conference was open to all school staff and government support agencies, with educators being our targeted audience. The conference was also open to community agencies, parents, students, and politicians.

### **Project Origination**

During the 2016 NDPC/N At-Risk Youth National FORUM, the idea to host a statewide dropout prevention summit at Jackson State University came about during conversations with presenters at the FORUM. During the discussion, I inquired the cost that would be associated with those presenters coming to Jackson State University and the time frame that worked best for their schedules. Late spring of 2016, Jackson Public School (JPS) District was in danger of failing 29 of the 32 state accreditation benchmarks. JPS is the second largest school district in Mississippi, serving about 30,000 students, representing more than 80% of school-aged children in the state's capital and only urban municipality (retrieved from Jackson Public Schools website, <http://www.jackson.k12.ms.us/domain/1251>). By the end of the 2015-2016 school year JPS had failed 22 of the state's 32 accreditation benchmarks. The State of Mississippi's education ranks 50<sup>th</sup> in the nation with a grade of D (Retrieved from *Education Week* website, <http://www.edweek.org/ew/qc/2017/2017-state-education-grades-map.html>). The district and state data supported our efforts to share the successful strategies we had learned from the NDPC/N conferences and forums. We agreed to invite stakeholders from the entire state to participate as attendees.

The MLI staff decided to title the event “Mississippi Dropout Prevention Summit: Educating Educators toward Differentiated Education” and developed a schedule similar to those used at national conferences, which include keynote speakers for general sessions and workshops targeted toward specific NDPC/N certification themes. The goal was to have 150 registrants from across the state of Mississippi. Invitations were sent to school districts, school offices, tutoring services, government agencies, churches, and youth groups asking for participation as an attendee. We targeted the MS Department of education professional development office and school districts and high schools that had made significant improvements with dropout and graduation rates as possible presenters and/or panelists.

## Issues Addressed

- Graduation Rates
- Chronic Attendance Issues
- Student Support Services
- Social and Emotional Needs
- Graduation Rates
- Educator Bias and Support Services

## Desired Outcomes and Measurable Objectives

- A minimum of 100 attendees at the MS dropout prevention summit from across the state.
- It was our aspiration that the Mississippi Learning Institute becomes the leader in dropout prevention training and set the example of collaborating with outside agencies on behalf of students and educators.
- Decrease the number of dropouts in the State of Mississippi school system, more urgently in the JPS system.
- Provide workshops and professional development to share successful strategies.
- Increase stakeholder awareness of successful strategies aimed at students identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

The long-term objective is that statewide the number of students graduating will increase by 5%, reaching the projected targets of 85% by 2020. Participants will take back to their respective schools and districts strategies to employ for the most vulnerable students and those identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

## Strategies and/or Interventions

The strategies provided by presenters varied, but included the 15 research-based strategies provided by the NDPC/N. Workshop sessions were:

Morning Keynote Address from the NDPC/N Director  
Changing School Climate: Behavior Is A Symptom, Not the Problem!  
Open Forum Panel discussion on strategies that have proven effective  
Alternative Schooling: Customizable Education  
Individualized Instruction: Differentiated Education

## Project Timeline

February 2016	Initial planning & discussion project	March 2016	Approval of project cost
April 2016	Summit planning & confirmation of presenters		
May 2016	Announcement of summit and invitations sent statewide		
June 2016	Summit		

## Special Conditions and/or Expertise Required to Carry Out the Project

My expertise in technology were necessary and instrumental in developing a website for marketing and conference registration, as well as an electronic conference agenda and invitation. It proved beneficial that the Mississippi Learning Institute had positive relationships with many Mississippi school districts, agencies, and community organizations as we were soliciting their partnerships as attendees and/or presenters at the summit. Session presenters held expertise in their respective fields and shared those skills and knowledge base to our attendees.

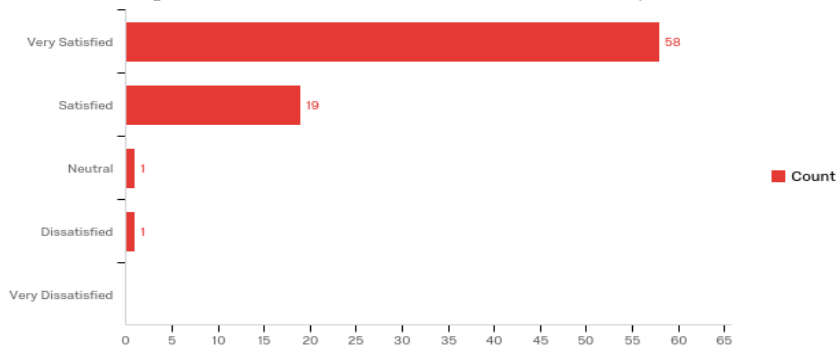
## Outcomes and Achievements

We successfully met and exceeded our goal of 150 registrants and had 167 in attendance. We successfully provided five different sessions and workshops in which we were able to share strategies that would benefit our stakeholder towards decreased dropout rates. We also had 52 incoming college freshman students enrolled in the summer development program at Jackson State University in attendance, which helped them understand the issues they will face toward graduating college as well.

## Outcomes Related to School Completion, Dropout Prevention, and/or Graduation Rates

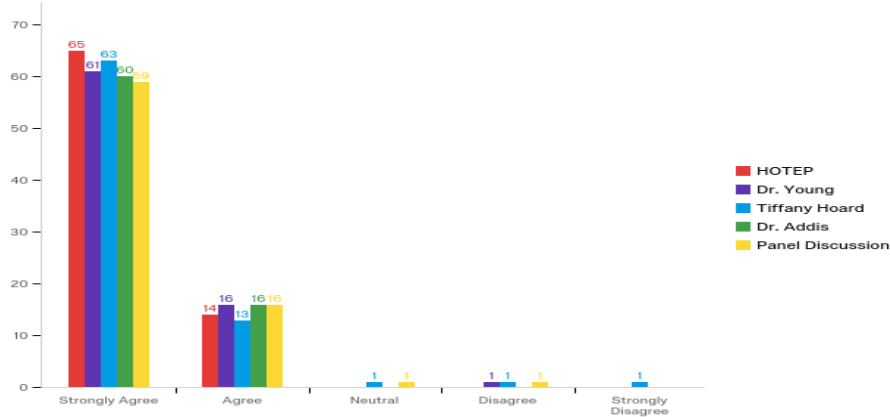
Outcomes were directly related to the implementation of successful strategies for educators and community partners. We will not know the impact of the summit until the end of the 2016-2017 school year. We hoped the strategic strands covered at the summit would affect our attendees and their teaching methodology in their respective school systems. Below are the summit evaluations results from our attendees:

### Q1. Workshop Services Evaluation: How satisfied are you:



#	Question	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Total
1	With the presenter's ability to engage participant interaction?	73.42%	58	24.05%	19	1.27%	79
2	With the examples and concepts of information presented?	78.48%	62	20.25%	16	1.27%	79
3	With the usefulness of the information?	77.22%	61	21.52%	17	0.00%	79
4	With the quality of the presentations and hands-on activities?	71.79%	56	25.64%	20	2.56%	78
5	With the time to discuss and share ideas?	73.42%	58	26.58%	21	0.00%	79
6	That you learned knowledge ad skills that will be useful at your job?	87.01%	67	11.69%	9	1.30%	77
7	With the amount of time dedicated to the overall workshop?	75.64%	59	24.36%	19	0.00%	78
8	With the overall value in helping you improve your professional effectiveness?	84.81%	67	13.92%	11	1.27%	79

Q2. Presenter Services Evaluation: Please indicate how you agree or disagree with the following statements. The overall presentation style was effective in helping me learn.



#	Question	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total
1	HOTE P	82.28%	65	17.72%	14	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	79
2	Dr. Young	78.21%	61	20.51%	16	0.00%	0	1.28%	1	0.00%	0	78
3	Tiffany Hoard	79.75%	63	16.46%	13	1.27%	1	1.27%	1	1.27%	1	79
4	Dr. Addis	78.95%	60	21.05%	16	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	76
5	Panel Discussion	76.62%	59	20.78%	16	1.30%	1	1.30%	1	0.00%	0	77

Q3 - Please tell us what MLI 2016 Dropout Prevention summit should do to improve the quality of this workshop?

This information was very beneficial.
1. Repeat HOTE P 2. Encourage school administration (hardly any here today) 3. Promote conference 3 months in advance (got a web notice) 4. Add small student panel/ get flier up
Very good summit! Happy I attended.
It may be a good idea to have breakfast sessions. The smaller group setting may be instrumental in producing a more conducive culture for learning and conversation.
The overall MLI dropout summit was very informative and beneficial.
Give the students a voice for they are the closest witnesses to the problems or issues surrounding dropout. They can be the voice of their peers; a voice that is unheard.
Provide breakfast session options.
Enjoyed the workshop! Incorporate a little information about collegiate level dropouts. Suggestions= No need to have break before lunch! See you next year.
Consider breakfast session as well as whole group session.
Start doing the Summit March earlier in the school year.
The information provided was very helpful.

### **Current Status of Project**

This project is a continuous effort to maintain an active presence as the dropout prevention training and development center for our stakeholders. Due to the success of the summit, it is our desire to host an MLI@JSU dropout prevention summit every year. However, our immediate next steps are to provide half-day and full-day workshops in the 15 effective strategies for dropout prevention to help educators increase strategies in working with vulnerable and at-risk students.

### **Role in Project as a NDPS Certification Program Participant**

As the lead on this project, my role as the coordinator was being responsible for hosting the events for a successful summit. I served as the lead planner, program and event coordinator, recruiting and negotiating fees for the presenters and vendors, as well as all media, web presence, and marketing for the event. I also served as a presenter for the last session of the day regarding differentiated instruction and teaching the millennial and iGeneration students.

### **Lessons Learned**

I learned from this process that it is best to identify key stakeholders and confirm their commitment in advance. Once the summit or event process is developed, it is important to adhere to the plan created with minimal adjustments. The most important lesson learned was to secure the proper dates and time for the stakeholders and target audience.

### **Advice for Dropout Prevention Practitioners About the Project**

My advice is to design the program around the needs of the students and the educators. Providing other options for educators to utilize in their methodology leads to increased opportunities for students to be successful and graduate.