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Innovative District process begins

Haley Berry
News Editor

"This [District Innovation process] is geared towards keeping students on track and involved in school," administrator Patti Wilkins-Seaman said. "Our ultimate goal is to see all of the freshman that enter our school graduate."

This school year has been marked with new opportunities for the students and faculty of the George County school district after deciding to begin the process of becoming a "District of Innovation."

The first step to becoming a "District of Innovation" is to complete the Innovation Lab Network process. Upon applying for the grant to assist with the Innovation Lab Network, the George County school district was accepted and is now in the process of becoming a "District of Innovation."

"Advancements in technology, coupled with evolving workforce demands, require students be given opportunities to achieve at their own pace, whether advancing beyond standard mastery or requiring additional support to achieve proficiency. MDE developed this project to move Mississippi ahead and to provide opportunities for more districts to implement strategies that prepare all students to be college and career ready," executive director of the Office of Secondary Education Jean Massey said.

The networks participate in innovative strategies and models that have proven effective in other districts and states or new innovative strategies and models created by the district or school.

Many new innovations are being made throughout the district that are working towards completing this process. Programs, such as

Twilight School, Collegiate Academy, STEM classes, STAR academy, credited Rebel Times and CTE programs have been implemented.

Twilight School is a new opportunity for alternative students to attend school Monday-Friday at night on the high school campus. Rebel Time was also recently implemented as an official credited class block, which allows students to complete extra classes, while gaining the credits they need to graduate.

Sixty percent days have been established to allow teachers from various schools within the George County district to work together, resulting in productivity and progression among students. Because of these new improvements and opportunities, there has been an increase in tests scores and graduation rate.

"We're trying innovative things to provide programs and such things to benefit children and prevent drop-

out," Wilkins-Seaman said. "We are able to have things that normal high schools wouldn't typically have."

Only five out of 155 districts in the state of Mississippi currently hold the title of a "District of Innovation."

Various school districts in the state of Mississippi such as Rankin County, Oxford and Hinds County have joined the MS-innovation Lab Network as well. A total of twelve districts are now in the preliminary network process, including our district.

At the conclusion of the school year, the George County district will be able to decide whether it is ready to apply to become a "District of Innovation" or if it wants to continue in the Innovation Lab Network.

In two short years, George County High School could be recognized as a school within a "District of Innovation" and receive special recognition and advantages for its advancements as a district.