



### **TPSD Earns All A's And B's From MDE**

**TUPELO, Miss.** — Grades are in, and the Tupelo Public School District has passed with flying colors.

Thursday evening, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) officially released its annual accountability model letter grades. TPSD received a B overall with five schools garnering an A. ECEC, Lawhon, Pierce Street, and Thomas Street, received A's for the second year in a row. The other A school was Carver.

No TPSD school was rated below a B.

“Pierce Street Elementary’s repeat A-rating is certainly cause for celebration. I applaud the hard work of our students and the efforts of our teachers and support staff,” principal Amy Barnett said. “The rating, however, did not come as a surprise. We simply worked to build from the successes of the previous academic year. We’re fortunate to have a seasoned faculty that allows us to refine best instructional practices, increasing academic gains for our students.”

Two of the biggest increases were at Carver and Tupelo Middle School.

After earning 432 points in 2018, Carver improved from a B to an A with 488 points. Carver (K-1) serves as the feeder school for Lawhon (2-5).

“We are very excited about Lawhon and Carver’s A-rating,” Carver principal Christy Carroll said. “Our staff works diligently to meet the needs of our students and to build a strong foundation at this early age to set all students up for success for years to come. Carver has strong parent,

family, and community support. We are so appreciative. Having an A-rating is definitely a celebration for our staff, students, and our whole school community.”

Like Carver, Lawhon welcomed an increase in points, from 450 to 466.

“Hats off to the 2018-2019 Lawhon family for achieving an A-Rating,” said first-year principal Ian Shumpert, who replaced Mark Enis back in the fall. “I am so proud of the faculty, the staff, and the previous administrators for their hard work and dedication. This is a great achievement and something everyone should be proud of receiving.”

In 2018, the middle school was given a C with 376 points. Last year, however, it improved its point total by 28 to receive a B.

Current assistant superintendent Dr. Brock English, who was the middle school principal last year before making the transition to central office, said the improvement wasn’t by chance. It took everyone buying into the process.

“I’m extremely proud of the way the teachers and staff came together to focus on areas of improvement,” he said. “We developed a plan of action, and then worked the plan. It’s a testament to the hard work and dedication of our teachers, staff, and students.”

Also showing gains were Lawndale (3-5) and the District overall.

Although it’s a B for the second-straight year, Lawndale’s overall point total went from 411 to 428, leaving it 14 points shy of an A. TPSD jumped from 646 to 654. With 14 more points, the District would have received an A.

Keys to improvement for the District involved several factors:

English-Language-Arts scores improved for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders, while English II moved into the Top 21 percentile.

Math scores saw improvement for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, and Algebra I.

Tupelo High School maintained a solid B, with the graduation rate increasing from 86.2 percent to 88.2 percent.

“The One Single Heartbeat represents those times when people work together to achieve extraordinary results,” Superintendent Dr. Rob Picou said. “It is obvious from our accountability scores that our teachers and our principals are working together with support staff to increase academic achievement for all students.”