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### **Better Together Commission Announces Selection of Insight Education Group to Conduct Student-Centered Study of Jackson Public School District**

*Insight to Study Needs of Students, Families and Staff to Inform Vision and Action Plan for District*

**(FEBRUARY 12, 2018) JACKSON, Miss.** – The Better Together Commission has selected Insight Education Group of Encino, California, to conduct a comprehensive student-centered study of the Jackson Public School District (JPS), a key step in the commission’s work to craft an action plan that leads to the academic success of all the district’s students.

“The selection of Insight Education Group is the next step in our efforts to understand the issues facing JPS. We are working with citizens from all sectors of the city to develop a long-term solution for our students,” said Claiborne Barksdale, co-chair of the Better Together Commission’s Study Action Table subcommittee. “This study is a critical component of this multifaceted effort to move the district forward.”

Insight was among eight applicants to submit a proposal to study the district. The commission evaluated the applicants against a rubric and three organizations were interviewed in person.

Insight has more than 17 years of experience conducting similar research, including recent work with the Syracuse, New York, school district that has been instrumental in achieving significant gains in student achievement. Insight will partner with District Management Group, which will focus on district-level issues of finance, personnel and organizational efficiency.

The in-depth student-centered study will take about 10 months to complete and will inform the commission as it develops an action plan that ensures the success of all students in the public school district. The findings will be shared with the public.

In addition to the study, the Better Together Commission is doing robust community outreach to ensure the community’s vision and voice is included in the plan. So far, the commission has conducted listening sessions in all seven wards and polled Jackson residents to learn more about their aspirations for and concerns about the district. The results of those engagement efforts will be shared with the public in the coming weeks.

“We are pleased with the community participation in this process thus far,” said Better Together Commission Co-chair Ivey Allen. “As we move forward, we will continue to engage students, parents, teachers and other stakeholders through canvassing, focus groups and other forums to make sure the solutions we propose are student-centered and reflective of the needs of the district.”

The Better Together Commission was formed late last year by Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant, Jackson Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, the Jackson Public School District and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation in an effort to find an innovative solution that transforms JPS into a high-achieving public school district in order to meet the needs of its 25,000-plus students.

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