

**Jeffrey L. Leffler**  
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**EXPERIENCE:**

**2023 to  
present**

**Associate Professor & Graduate Coordinator**  
**Meridian Division of Education**  
**Mississippi State University**

My responsibilities also include teaching, supervising students during field placements, advising undergraduate and graduate students, and serving as the program coordinator for the EdD in Educational Policy and Organizational Design and executive director for the MSU Teacher Residency. Additionally, I serve as graduate coordinator for the teaching and leading graduate programs in the division. Other responsibilities include pursuing an active program of research, publication, and service as well as collaborating with faculty in the division to achieve common goals.

**2022 to  
2023**

**Assistant Professor & Interim Head**  
**Meridian Division of Education**  
**Mississippi State University**

Essential duties and responsibilities included: the academic and administrative leadership of the Division of Education; leadership for the development and implementation of Education academic programs and courses; recommend the selection and provide supervision of all full-time and part-time faculty and staff of the Division; assume a leading role in fund raising, development, and community relations; responsible for evaluation of educational programs, curricula development, fiscal management, faculty development and establishing high academic standards for scholarship, maintains a climate conducive to collaboration among faculty, staff and students and appropriate academic departments throughout the MSU system; and functions as official representative of the University Division through community service activities.

**2016 to  
2022**

**Assistant Professor of Elementary Education and  
Interim Graduate Coordinator (2018 to 2022)**  
**Director of Graduate Studies (2017-2018)**  
**Meridian Division of Education**  
**Mississippi State University**

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My teaching responsibilities included teaching undergraduate and graduate level courses:

EDE 3123 – Early Childhood Education  
EDE 3443 – Creative Arts Elementary/Middle Level  
EDE 4113 – Teaching Elementary/Middle Level Science  
EDE 4143 – Teaching Elementary/Middle Level Social Studies  
EDE 8313 – Theory and Development of Early Childhood Education  
EDE 8443 – Seminar in Elementary Education  
EDE 8473 – Elementary Social Studies Curriculum  
EDE 8513 – Curriculum and Program Development for Early Childhood  
EDE 8533 – Behavioral Experiences in Early Childhood Education  
EDE 8543 – Mathematics Experiences in Early Childhood Education  
EDE 8623 – Content Area and Disciplinary Literacy Instruction  
EDS 8243 – Advanced Planning and Managing of Learning  
EDS 8613 – Middle and Secondary School Curriculum  
EDX 4413 – Working with Families of Students with Disabilities  
EDX 8173 – Special Education in the Regular Classroom  
HDFS 2813 – Child Development  
RDG 3513 – Reading Strategies for Secondary School  
RDG 4133 – Integrating Language Arts Instruction in the Content Areas  
RDG 6113—Middle Level Literacy Development and Instruction

My responsibilities also included supervising students during field placements and advising undergraduate and graduate students. Additionally, I coordinated the graduate programs in community college education, counselor education, education administration, elementary education, and secondary education for the division. Other responsibilities included pursuing an active program of research, publication, and service as well as collaborating with faculty in the division to achieve common goals.

**2012 to  
2016**

**Executive Director, Center for Child Development  
Visiting Assistant Professor, Child & Family Studies  
The University of Southern Mississippi**

I served as executive director for the Center for Child Development and as a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Child and Family Studies. My responsibilities included teaching two or more child development courses each semester:

CD 350 - Child Development  
CD 351 - Advanced Child Development  
CD 352 - Behavior and Guidance  
CD 450 – Administration of Child and Family Programs  
CD 452 - Methods and Materials  
CD 453 - Curriculum Activities for Young Children

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CD 455 – Supervised Participation  
CD 654 – Seminar in Child Development

My responsibilities also included leadership for the Hattiesburg and Gulf Coast (founding director) centers, securing and managing externally funded projects, and contributing to the research mission of programs in the Department of Child and Family Studies.

**2009 to  
2012**

**Coordinator  
Early Childhood Institute  
Mississippi State University**

I coordinated statewide early childhood initiatives including regional training conferences for early childhood professionals, a quality enhancement program that provided technical assistance to child care centers, and early childhood professional development programs. My responsibilities included staff training and supervision, program development, research, and delivery of direct services.

**2010 to  
2011**

**Adjunct Instructor  
Mississippi State University-Meridian**

I taught courses including:

EDE 3123 - Early Childhood Education  
EDE 3343 - Teaching Adolescent Literature  
RDG 3113 - Early Literacy I  
RDG 3123 - Early Literacy II

**2001 to  
2011**

**Adjunct Instructor  
The University of Southern Mississippi**

I taught classes in the Department of Child and Family Studies including:

CD 350 - Child Development  
CD 351 - Advanced Child Development  
CD 352 - Behavior and Guidance  
CD 452 - Methods and Materials  
CD 453 - Creative Activities for Young Children  
CD 455 - Supervised Participation

I also supervised interns in Special Education.

**2008 to  
2009**

**Classroom Environment Evaluator/Monitor  
Early Childhood Institute  
Mississippi State University**

I evaluated and monitored child care centers in the southern half of Mississippi participating in the *Mississippi Child Care Quality Step System*.

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- 2004 to 2008**                      **Elementary Teacher and Principal**  
**School of Excellence**  
I served as a fifth and sixth grade language arts and social studies teacher and principal of the private elementary school. A key component of the school's philosophy was a focus on the arts with students participating in visual, music, and theater arts classes daily.
- 2000 to 2002 & 2006 to 2008**                      **Technical Assistant/Evaluator**  
**Mississippi State University**  
I served as a part-time consultant for the Early Childhood Institute at MSU providing evaluation and technical assistance to improve the quality of Mississippi's child care centers.
- 1997 to 2008**                      **Associate Pastor**  
**River of Life Church**  
My responsibilities included leading all aspects of the church's ministry to children from birth to junior high including outreach ministries and the founding of an early education program in 2000 of which I served as a preschool teacher and administrator.
- 2004 to 2007**                      **CDA Trainer**  
**The University of Southern Mississippi**  
I participated in a program offered through the Child and Family Studies Department and the Mississippi Department of Human Services to provide training for early childhood teachers seeking the Child Development Associate credential from The Council for Professional Recognition.
- 2004**                      **Adjunct Instructor**  
**Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College**  
I taught the child care administration course for one semester.
- 2000 to 2004**                      **R.E.A.L. Learning Specialist**  
**Group Publishing, Inc.**  
I provided training for churches using Group's children's ministry curricular resources including *Hands On Bible*, *Faithweaver*, and Group VBS in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.
- 2000 to 2001**                      **Graduate Assistant**  
**The University of Southern Mississippi**  
I provided support to the director of the USM Center for Child Development including scheduling and supervision of students participating in laboratory courses.
- 1999 to**                      **Assistant Teacher**
- July 2024

**2000** **USM Center for Child Development**  
I worked part-time as a toddler and preschool assistant teacher.

**EDUCATION:**

**2020 to 2021** **Additional Doctoral Study  
Higher Education Leadership**  
Mississippi State University  
Mississippi State, Mississippi

**2017** **Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum & Instruction  
Minor: Community College Leadership**  
Mississippi State University  
Mississippi State, Mississippi

**2010** **Educational Specialist in Elementary Education**  
Mississippi State University  
Meridian, Mississippi

**2001** **Master of Science in Early Intervention**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

**2000** **Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Studies**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

**1998** **Associate of Liberal Arts**  
Jones County Junior College  
Ellisville, Mississippi

**CREDENTIALS:**

**2011 to 2029** **Class AAAA Teacher's License**  
**211 Special Education Birth-Kindergarten**  
**188 General Sciences (7-12)**  
**192 Social Studies (7-12)**  
**322 Home Economics (7-12)**  
State of Mississippi

**2001** **Ordination for Gospel Ministry**  
River of Life Church  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE:**

July 2024

2023 to present	<p><b>Reviewer</b>  <b>National Field Experience Conference</b>  I review conference presentation proposals for the National Field Experience Conference.</p>
2023	<p><b>Reviewer</b>  <b>IGI Global</b>  I reviewed a book chapter manuscript for a publication entitled <i>Adjunct Faculty in Higher Education: Best Practices for Teaching Adult Learners</i>.</p>
2023 to present	<p><b>Member</b>  <b>Early Childhood Program Standards Position Statement Workgroup</b>  <b>National Association for the Education of Young Children</b>  I serve on this workgroup to revise the early learning program standards position statement.</p>
2023 to 2024	<p><b>Member</b>  <b>Strategy and Innovation Committee</b>  <b>National Association for the Education of Young Children</b>  I serve on this committee that advises the governing board on strategy and new initiatives.</p>
2023 to Present	<p><b>Co-Chair</b>  <b>True Cost of Care Working Group</b>  <b>Mississippi Early Learning Alliance</b>  I co-chair this working group that is responsible for helping Forum for the Future investigate the true cost of child care in Mississippi through research-informed collective impact efforts.</p>
2023	<p><b>State Team Leader</b>  <b>Public Policy Forum</b>  <b>National Association for the Education of Young Children</b>  I served as the state team lead for Mississippi and organized participation by 25 early childhood advocates in the public policy forum in Washington, D.C.</p>
2023 to present	<p><b>Chair</b>  <b>Council for NAEYC Accreditation</b>  <b>National Association for the Education of Young Children</b>  I chair this council that governs policies, monitors and provides feedback, oversees accreditation decisions, recommends cooperative relationships, and reviews proposed revisions for the accreditation of early learning programs.</p>
2022 to Present	<p><b>Member</b>  <b>Forum for the Future Steering Committee</b></p>

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**Mississippi Early Learning Alliance**

The steering committee is responsible for helping Forum for the Future refine its overall vision, track progress effectively, and grow its influence. Members help define the scope of the initiative, provide strategic direction, determine measures of success, and champion the work to others.

**2021 to present**

**Member**

**Council for NAEYC Accreditation Annual Report Committee**

**National Association for the Education of Young Children**

I serve on this committee that informs the collection and use of data for early learning program accreditation.

**2021 to 2023**

**Member (Chair-Elect 2022)**

**Council for NAEYC Accreditation**

**National Association for the Education of Young Children**

I serve on this council that governs policies, monitors and provides feedback, oversees accreditation decisions, recommends cooperative relationships, and reviews proposed revisions for the accreditation of early learning programs.

**2020 to 2022**

**CISE Graduate Program Coordinator**

**Meridian Division of Education**

I lead the CISE graduate faculty in curriculum planning, student advisement, course scheduling, and recruitment activities.

**2018 to 2022**

**Liaison**

**Any Given Child Meridian**

The primary goal of the Kennedy Center's *Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child* program is to assist communities in developing and implementing a plan for expanded arts education in their schools, ensuring access and equity for all students in grades K-8. I serve as the liaison to the Kennedy Center for this initiative in Meridian, MS.

**2018 to present**

**Reviewer**

**Journal of Human Sciences and Extension**

I review manuscripts for this peer-reviewed professional journal.

**2018 to present**

**P16 Strategic Advancement Committee**

**Meridian Public School District**

I serve on this committee of stakeholders that support the district's strategic initiatives.

**2018 to 2019**

**Interim Executive Director**

**Southern Early Childhood Association**

I provided strategic direction for the Southern Early Childhood Association and assist with operational oversight.

**2017 to  
2022**

**Graduate Coordinator  
Meridian Division of Education**

I coordinate the graduate programs in community college education, counselor education, education administration, elementary education, and secondary education for the division.

**2017 to  
2022**

**Elementary Coordinator  
Meridian Division of Education**

I lead the elementary faculty in curriculum planning, student advisement, course scheduling, and recruitment activities.

**2016 to  
2022**

**PANTA Initiative Coordinator  
Meridian Division of Education**

I coordinate the Professional Assistance Network for Teacher Assistants (PANTA) initiative that makes the teacher education program at MSU Meridian more accessible to teacher assistants and other school personnel.

**2016 to  
present**

**Advisory Council  
Mississippi Early Childhood Association**

I serve in an advisory capacity for the president for the association.

**2014 to  
2019**

**Member-at-Large  
Southern Early Childhood Association Board of Directors**

I served as member-at-large. In this position, I am responsible for representing the diverse early educators of the South.

**2018**

**Curriculum Reviewer  
West Virginia University**

I reviewed the third and fourth editions of a curriculum entitled *Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist* by Drs. Wade and Porter of West Virginia University Extension Service. It was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor and implemented through River Valley Child Development Services.

**2017 to  
2018**

**Editorial Committee Chair  
*Dimensions of Early Childhood***

I chaired the committee that provides direction for the Southern Early Childhood Association's publications including the nationally recognized, peer-reviewed professional journal, *Dimensions of Early Childhood*.

**2017**

**Curriculum Reviewer  
West Virginia University**

July 2024



I reviewed the first and second editions of a curriculum entitled *Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist* by Drs. Wade and Porter of West Virginia University Extension Service. It was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor and implemented through River Valley Child Development Services.

**2017**

**State Policy Learning Table Member  
Build Initiative and Mississippi Department of Education**

I participated in this workgroup that supports states to shift policy to have a deeper focus on teaching and learning in early childhood that results in improved outcomes for children, especially those at risk.

**2017**

**Professional Development Commission Chair  
Southern Early Childhood Association**

I served as chair of a commission that guides the professional development initiatives of the Southern Early Childhood Association.

**2016 to  
2017**

**Research Agenda Advisory Committee  
Mississippi Department of Education**

I served on a committee that serves in an advisory role to assist with the research efforts of the agency.

**2015 to  
2017**

**Leadership Commission Chair  
Southern Early Childhood Association**

I served as chair of a commission that guides the leadership development initiatives of the Southern Early Childhood Association.

**2014**

**Early Childhood Stakeholder Meeting  
Mississippi Department of Education**

I represented USM and MsECA on a panel of early childhood stakeholders giving input on MDE's planned preschool expansion grant application with the US Department of Education.

**2014**

**Bridging the Gap: School Readiness by 5  
Panelist**

I participated in a roundtable discussion and as a panelist for a community conversation hosted by the City of Hattiesburg, the National League of Cities and the U.S. Department of Education.

**2014**

**Textbook Reviewer  
Pearson Education, Inc.**

I reviewed a textbook entitled *Creating Environments for Learning: Birth to Age Eight (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)* by Julie Bullard.

**2013 to  
2014**

**Immediate Past President and Interim Executive Director  
Mississippi Early Childhood Association**

July 2024

I served as the immediate past president and interim executive director of the association. In this position, I was responsible for assisting the president in implementing all programs of the association.

**2012 to  
2014**

**Quality Rating and Improvement System Revision Group**

I served on a group for the Mississippi Department of Human Services to make recommendations for revisions to Mississippi's Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care programs.

**2003 to  
2014**

**Executive Director  
Zoe Kids Ministries**

I served as the volunteer executive director of this ministry to children and families. The organization provided theatrical ministry events for families, resource materials, children's ministry training and an early education program called Faith Roots Preschool.

**2013**

**Arts Integration in Early Childhood Panelist  
Whole Schools Initiative Summer Institute**

I participated in an expert panel on arts integration in early childhood education.

**2012 to  
2013**

**Whole Schools Site Evaluator  
Mississippi Arts Commission**

I served as a site evaluator for this comprehensive statewide arts education program that uses the arts as a vehicle for promoting high-quality instruction and learning for students in all disciplines.

**2012 to  
2013**

**President  
Mississippi Early Childhood Association**

I served as the president of the association. In this position, I was responsible for implementing all programs of the association.

**2011 to  
2013**

**Editorial Committee  
Southern Early Childhood Association**

I served on the committee that provides direction for the association's publications including the peer-reviewed professional journal, *Dimensions of Early Childhood*.

**2012 to  
2013**

**Early Learning Guidelines Revision Task Force**

I served on a task force for the Mississippi Department of Education to revise current Early Learning Guidelines and write Early Learning Standards in the area of creative expression.

**2002 & 2008 to  
2012**

**Executive Board Member  
Mississippi Early Childhood Association**

July 2024

I have served as president-elect, 1<sup>st</sup> vice president, and child care licensure chair. I also assisted in the planning and implementation of regional education conferences.

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>2012</b>         | <b>Early Childhood Focus Group: Pre-Kindergarten Legislative Funding Request</b><br>I served on a focus group for the Mississippi Department of Education to assist in the design of a request for proposals for grant programs for school districts in Mississippi to implement pre-kindergarten programs. |
| <b>2011</b>         | <b>Race to the Top Professional Development Committee</b><br>I served on this committee making recommendations to improve the State's early childhood professional development system as part of the Race to the Top grant application.   |
| <b>2010 to 2011</b> | <b>Conference Chair<br/>Mississippi Early Childhood Association</b><br>I served the association by leading the development and implementation of the Imagine conference, the association's annual conference.   |
| <b>2008 to 2010</b> | <b>Conference Program Chair<br/>Mississippi Early Childhood Association</b><br>I served the association by developing the program for the association's annual conference.  |

**UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE, AND DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES:**

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>2024 to present</b> | MSU – Meridian Division of Education<br>Co-chair - Search Committee for Assistant/Associate Teaching Professor of Educational Policy & Organizational Design |
| <b>2023 to present</b> | MSU College of Education<br>Research Committee   |
| <b>2023 to present</b> | Mississippi State University<br>MSU-Meridian Representative<br>Faculty Research Advisory Committee   |
| <b>2023 to present</b> | MSU-Meridian Division of Education<br>Chair<br>Promotion and Tenure Committee  |
| <b>2021 to 2022</b>    | MSU – Meridian Division of Education<br>Chair  |

	Search Committee for Clinical Assistant Professor of Secondary Education
<b>2021 to 2022</b>	MSU – Meridian Division of Education Search Committee for Instructor of Elementary Education
<b>2021 to 2022</b>	Mississippi State University Faculty Development Taskforce
<b>2018 to 2019</b>	MSU – Meridian Campus Search Committee for Academic Advisor for Education
<b>2018 to 2019</b>	MSU – Meridian Division of Education Search Committee for Clinical Assistant Professor in Education Leadership
<b>2018 to 2021</b>	MSU College of Education Research Committee
<b>2017 to 2022</b>	MSU College of Education Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Committee
<b>2017 to 2022</b>	MSU College of Education Graduate Coordinators Advisory Council
<b>2017 to 2022</b>	MSU College of Education Assessment Committee
<b>2017 to present</b>	MSU College of Education Teacher Education Council
<b>2018</b>	Mississippi State University University Committee on Courses and Curricula
<b>2017 to 2018</b>	MSU – Meridian Division of Education Search Committee for Division Head
<b>2016 to present</b>	MSU College of Education Office of Clinical/Field-Based Instruction, Licensure, and Outreach (OCFBI) Advisory Committee
<b>2017</b>	MSU – Meridian Campus Search Committee for Physician Assistant Program Director
<b>2012 to 2016</b>	USM Department of Child and Family Studies Child Development Emphasis Workgroup

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**2013 to 2014** USM College of Education and Psychology  
College Recruitment, Retention and Public Relations Committee

**2012 to 2013** USM Department of Child and Family Studies  
Search Committee for Assistant Professor

**CURRENT RESEARCH:**

**IRB-191466: Needs and Perspectives of Parents Attending College**

This project seeks to understand the impact of the provision of academic and parenting supports on the retention and completion of undergraduate and graduate students in Meridian.

**GRANTS SUBMITTED:**

Determining the Impact of Incorporating National Board Standards During Pre-Service Experiences on Teacher Success, Future National Board Certification, Student Growth, and Teacher Retention. (2024). Spencer Foundation. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Ksenia Zhbanova. \$499,680.

**GRANTS FUNDED:**

Black Educator's Initiative (2024). National Center for Teacher Residencies. Co-principal Investigator with Michelle Stubbs and Kevin Entrekin. \$150,000.

Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grant (2023). Mississippi State University. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Melissa Windham and Kevin Entrekin. \$25,000.

Any Given Child Meridian (2022). The Phil Hardin Foundation. Submitted by Dr. Jeffrey Leffler and Tracy Scott of the Meridian Public School District (Awarded to the Meridian Public School District). \$225,000.

Mississippi Teacher Residency in Critical Shortage Areas (2021). Mississippi Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Brandi Sumrall, Dr. Angela Mulkana, and Dr. Kellie Fondren. \$2,036,580.00.

Strengthening GYO Educator Programs in Your Community (2021). New America. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Melissa Windham, Dr. Rosalind Operton, and Brandi Sumrall. \$65,000.

Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grant (2021). Mississippi State University. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Ksenia Zhbanova. \$20,000.

GEER for Meridian Division of Education (2021). United States Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Kimberly Hall and Brandi Sumrall. \$143,546.45.

Any Given Child Meridian (2021). Broadhead Foundation. Submitted by Tracy Scott of the Meridian Public School District and Dr. Jeffrey Leffler (awarded to the Meridian Public School District). \$25,000.

Expanding Mississippi Jumpstart to Serve Children in Meridian, MS (2020). The Phil Hardin Foundation. Principal Investigator. \$36,918.

Stand By You Rapid Response (2020). Women's Foundation of Mississippi. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Ksenia Zhanova. \$2,000.

Any Given Child Meridian (2020). The Phil Hardin Foundation. Submitted by Clair Huff of the Meridian Public School District, Tiffany McGehee of the MSU Riley Center and Dr. Jeffrey Leffler (awarded to the Meridian Public School District). \$100,000.

Any Given Child Meridian (2020). The Riley Foundation. Submitted by Clair Huff of the Meridian Public School District, Tiffany McGehee of the MSU Riley Center and Dr. Jeffrey Leffler (awarded to the Meridian Public School District). \$25,000.

Any Given Child Meridian (2019). Broadhead Foundation. Submitted by Clair Huff of the Meridian Public School District, Tiffany McGehee of the MSU Riley Center and Dr. Jeffrey Leffler (awarded to the Meridian Public School District). \$25,000.

Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grant (2019). Mississippi State University. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Kimberly R. Hall. \$15,000.

Mississippi Teacher Residency (2019). Mississippi Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Brandi Sumrall. \$716,127.

Stand By You (2018). Women's Foundation of Mississippi. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Ksenia Zhanova. \$30,000.

Professional Advancement Network for Teacher Assistants Tuition Assistance (2017). East Mississippi Center for Educational Development. Submitted by Dr. Terry Dale Cruse and Dr. Jeffrey Leffler. \$25,000.

Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grant (2016). Mississippi State University. Submitted by: Dr. Kimberly R. Hall, Counselor Education; Dr. Lindon Ratliff, Secondary Education; Dr. Mark Fincher, Community College Education; Jeffrey Leffler, Elementary Education. \$10,000.

Increasing Retention and Graduation Rates through the Provision of Child Care Services to Low-Income University Students (2016). United States Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Angel Herring (Awarded to The University of Southern Mississippi). \$288,840.

Playground Enhancement at the Center for Child Development (2015). The University of Southern Mississippi Foundation. Principal Investigator. \$10,000.

Increasing Retention and Graduation Rates through the Provision of Child Care Services to Low-Income University Students (2015). United States Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Angel Herring. \$288,840.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (2015). United States Department of Agriculture. Principal Investigator. \$45,000.

Increasing Retention and Graduation Rates through the Provision of Child Care Services to Low-Income University Students (2014). United States Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Angel Herring. \$288,840.

EYN Early Childhood Conferences (2014). Mississippi Department of Human Services. Principal Investigator. \$78,118.

EYN TTA Credential (2014). Mississippi Department of Human Services. Principal Investigator. \$52,874.

Early Intervention for First Steps at the Center for Child Development (2014). Mississippi State Department of Health, First Steps Early Intervention. Principal Investigator. \$10,000.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (2014). United States Department of Agriculture. Principal Investigator. \$38,000.

Early Years Network Partnership (2014). Mississippi Department of Human Services. Principal Investigator. \$108,091.

Early Intervention for First Steps at the Center for Child Development (2013). Mississippi State Department of Health, First Steps Early Intervention. Principal Investigator. \$17,000.

Increasing Retention and Graduation Rates through the Provision of Child Care Services to Low-Income University Students (2013). United States Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Angel Herring. \$288,840.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (2013). United States Department of Agriculture. Principal Investigator. \$47,000.

Early Childhood Conferences (2013). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Gail Lindsey of Mississippi State University. \$217,375 (\$33,845 subcontracted to the University of Southern Mississippi).

Proposal Development Grant (2013). University of Southern Mississippi. Co-Investigator with Dr. Angel Herring. \$2,000.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (2012). United States Department of Agriculture. Principal Investigator. \$28,500.

Child Care Access Means Parents in School (2012). United States Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Angel Herring. \$155,720.

Early Childhood Conferences (2012). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. Co-Principal Investigator with Lynn Darling of Mississippi State University. \$205,746 (\$25,202 subcontract to the University of Southern Mississippi).

Child Care Access Means Parents in School (2011). United States Department of Education. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Angel Herring. \$155,740.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (2011). United States Department of Agriculture. Principal Investigator. \$38,000.

Early Childhood Conferences (2011). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. Principal Investigator. \$175,304.

Bridges to Quality: The Mississippi Early Childhood Professional Development Project (2010). United States Department of Education. Co-Investigator with Elizabeth F. Shores (proposal written by Elizabeth F. Shores). \$750,000.

CDA as a First Step (2010). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. Co-Investigator with Monnie Vail. \$150,000.

CDA as a First Step (2009). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Office of Children and Youth. Co-Investigator with Monnie Vail. \$250,000.

Sanctuary Construction (2005). Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. Principal Investigator. \$40,000.

#### **GRANTS NOT FUNDED:**

Mississippi Teacher Residency in STEM Critical Shortage Areas (2023). National Science Foundation. Co-Principal Investigator with Dr. Jarrod Fogarty, Dr. Alisha Milam, and Michelle Stubbs. \$2,589,874.00.

Civil Rights Freedom Trail from Reconstruction to Modern Day (2021). National Endowment for the Humanities. Submitted by: Dr. Jeffrey Leffler, Brandi Sumrall, Dr. Kenneth Anthony, Dr. Lindon Ratliff, and Dr. Tania Hanna. \$132,702.

Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grant (2020). Mississippi State University. Co-principal Investigator with Dr. Kimberly R. Hall. \$15,000.

Graduate Recruitment Assistance Grant (2017). Mississippi State University. Submitted by: Dr. Kimberly R. Hall, Interim Division Head; Dr. Jeffrey Leffler, Elementary Education; Dr. Lindon Ratliff, Secondary Education; Dr. Mark Fincher, Community College Education; Dr. Penny Wallin, Educational Leadership. \$10,000.



21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Center Grant (2017). Mississippi Department of Education. Submitted by: Dr. Jeffrey Leffler and Dr. Ksenia Zhbanova. \$700,000.

Planning Our Path to Success (2015). United States Department of Health and Human Services. Co-Principal Investigator with Angel Herring and Amanda Williams. \$4,903,687.

Jump Start (2015). United Way of South Mississippi. Co-Principal Investigator with Angel Herring. \$100,000.

Center Based Training and Technical Assistance (2013). United Way of South Mississippi. Co-Principal Investigator with Angel Herring. \$144,002.

Professional Development Programs (2012). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. \$892,569.

On-Site Technical Assistance Programs (2012). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. \$446,882.

Professional Development Programs (2011). Mississippi Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development. \$890,000.

Chapel Construction (2005). Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund. \$200,000.

#### **REFEREED PUBLICATION:**

Leffler, J., & Zhbanova, K. (Manuscript in Progress). Impact of College and Career Readiness Standards on kindergarten teachers' instructional practices.

Leffler, J., & Brenner, D. (Manuscript in Progress). School readiness perceptions of parents, pre-kindergarten teachers, and kindergarten teachers.

Stubbs, M. & Leffler, J. (in press). Empowering Educators: Addressing teacher shortages and retention through National Board Certification and professional development. *The Field Experience Journal*.

Leffler, J. & Zhbanova, K. (2024). Closing the knowledge gap with literacy-infused and rich social studies content. *Journal of Research Initiatives*, 8(3), 1-14.

King, J., Zhbanova, K., & Leffler, J. (2024). Role of early childhood educators in addressing diversity. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 52(1), 30-35.

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Leffler, J. L. & Crum, K. E. (2022). The Pandemic's Influence on Diffusion of Instructional Technology in

Teacher Education Programs. *The Field Experience Journal*, 28(1), 1-17. Retrieved from [https://www.unco.edu/cebs/national-field-experience-conference/pdf/FEJ\\_spring\\_22.pdf](https://www.unco.edu/cebs/national-field-experience-conference/pdf/FEJ_spring_22.pdf)

Zhbanova, K., Leffler, J. & Rule, A. C. (2020). Attitude analysis of child-constructed scenes depicting human interactions with unpopular nonhuman animals. *Society & Animals*, 28(3), 1-24. [doi.org/10.1163/15685306-BJA10003](https://doi.org/10.1163/15685306-BJA10003)

Leffler, J., Suddeath, E., Cruse, T. D., & Hall, K. R. (2020). Innovative Approach to Meet the Needs of Working Professionals Through Blended Learning. In M. Okojie & H. Lawrence (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Adult Learning in Higher Education*. Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

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Parker, J.C., Herring, A., Leffler, J. & Hallberg, C. (2014). Creating a community classroom: Strategies to promote inclusion and reduce bullying- A focus on anti-bullying in early childhood. *Journal of Human Sciences and Extension*, 2(3), 79-86. Retrieved from [http://media.wix.com/ugd/c8fe6e\\_04766e1d35af4e02a50077c2f046c044.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/c8fe6e_04766e1d35af4e02a50077c2f046c044.pdf)

Leffler, J.L. & Harper, S. L. (2011). The impact of teacher quality on preschoolers' mathematics and literacy achievement. *The Field Experience Journal*, 7, 15-32.

#### **VIDEO:**

Shores, E.F. (Producer) & Leffler, J.L. (Associate Producer). (2011). *Quick peeks at good practice: Video visits to Mississippi early childhood classrooms* [Video series]. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

#### **BOOKS, REPORTS AND OTHER WRITING:**

Leffler, J. (2018). SECA moves forward with new strategic plan. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 46(3), 5.

Whitener, C., Bush, K., & Leffler, J. (2018). *Arts integration for young children: A position statement of the Southern Early Childhood Association (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)*. Little Rock, AR: Southern Early Childhood Association.

Leffler, J. (Ed.) (2018, August). *KIDS COUNT in the SECA states 2018*. Little Rock, AR: Southern Early Childhood Association.

Leffler, J. (Ed.) (2016, July). *The leadership letter*, 10(4). Southern Early Childhood Association.

Leffler, J. & Daily, A. (Eds.) (2016, May). *The leadership letter*, 10(3). Southern Early Childhood Association.

Leffler, J., Lindsey, G. & Prince, D. (2014). *Early Childhood Conferences, 2012-2013: Final Report*. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

Leffler, J. (2012). Extend these ideas with books: Connect story-reading strategies with a children's book [Review of the book *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*]. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*.

Leffler, J. (2011). *Quick peeks at good practice: Video visits to Mississippi early childhood classrooms; User's guide*. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

Shores, E.F., Deng, S., Leffler, J., Thomas, J. & Howard, E. (2011). *Partners for Quality Child Care: 2006-2011*. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

Leffler, J. L., & Shores, E. F. (2011). *Education options for early childhood careers in Mississippi* [Brochure]. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

Leffler, J. & Watson, J.C. (2011). *ERS data study*. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

Leffler, J. & Eddowes, E. A. (2010). Books for early childhood educators [Review of the book *Getting it right for young children of diverse backgrounds: Applying research to improve practice*]. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 38(3),39.

Leffler, J. (2010, July). Quality Early Childhood Math & Literacy Instruction. *MSECA Connections*.

Vail, M., Leffler, J., Shores, E.F. & Howard, E. (2010). *The Mississippi Child Development Associate Scholarship Program, 2008-2009: Final Report*. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

Vail, M., Leffler, J., Shores, E.F. & Howard, E. (2010). *The Mississippi Child Development Associate Scholarship Program, 2007-2008: Final Report*. Mississippi State, MS: Mississippi State University Early Childhood Institute.

#### **REFEREED AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS:**

Leffler, J. (2024, April). MSU's Multifaceted Approach to Tacking Teacher Shortages. MSU College of Education Research So What Talk. (Invited)

Stubbs, M., Leffler, J., Zhanova, K. (2024, March). Transforming Pre-Service Field Experiences with NBPTS' Five Core Propositions and Architecture of Accomplished Teaching. National Field Experience Conference. (Refereed)

Hamel, E. , Leffler, J., & Lee Ward, S. (2024, March). Guiding Efforts for Diversity and Early Childhood Education. Southern Early Childhood Association Conference. (Refereed)

- Leffler, J. & Johnson, L. (2024, March). The MSU Teacher Residency as a Promising Practice for Creating Representation in Public Schools. National Field Experience Conference. (Refereed)
- Leffler, J., Entekin, K. (2023, April). Mississippi Teacher Residency Program. National Field Experience Conference. (Refereed)
- Leffler, J. (2022, February). Facilitating Literacy Behaviors with PreK-Kindergarten. Southern Early Childhood Association Annual Conference. (Refereed)
- Leffler, J. (2020, October). Leveraging Your Learning Management System to Heighten the Teacher/Student Experience. Webinar presentation for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. (Invited)
- Leffler, J. (2020, September). Effectively Using Webex/Zoom to Facilitate Engagement. Webinar presented for the East Mississippi Center for Educational Development. (Invited)
- Leffler, J. (2020, September). Principles of Effective Online/Blended Instruction. Webinar presented for the East Mississippi Center for Educational Development. (Invited)
- Leffler, J. (2020, July). Getting Started with Canvas. Webinar presented for the East Mississippi Center for Educational Development. (Invited)
- Zhbanova, K., Leffler, J. & Cruse, T.D. (2019, September). The MSU Story with the Arts. Invited presentation at the Mississippi Association for Arts Education Convening. Meridian, Mississippi.
- Leffler, J. (2019, April). Supporting Literacy Behaviors in the Early Childhood Classroom. Celebrating Connections Conference. Charleston, WV.
- Leffler, J. (2019, April). The Arts as an Approach to Learning. Celebrating Connections Conference. Charleston, WV.
- Leffler, J., Grace, C. & Simmons, G. (2019, February). SECA Leadership Forum. Invited presentation at the Southern Early Childhood Association Annual Conference. Orlando, Florida.
- Leffler, J. (2018, April). Professional Advancement Network for Teacher Assistants. National Field Experience Conference. Greeley, Colorado.
- Wolff, K., Bales, D., Leffler, J. & Cortez, M. (2018, March). Are You an Author? Invited workshop at the Southern Early Childhood Association Annual Conference. Lexington, Kentucky.
- Melendez, W., Creech, F., Leffler, J. & Cortez, M. (2018, March). Reviewing for *Dimensions*. Invited workshop at the Southern Early Childhood Association Annual Conference. Lexington, Kentucky.
- Leffler, J. (2018, March). SECA Leadership Forum. Invited presentation at the Southern Early

Childhood Association Annual Conference. Lexington, Kentucky.

Leffler, J. (2018, January). Play-based Literacy Instruction. Invited workshop at the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools Preschool Seminar. Jackson, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2018, January). Play-based Literacy Instruction. Invited workshop at the Jackson Association for Children Under Six conference. Jackson, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2017, November). Defining Readiness: How Has the Standards Movement Impacted Perspectives on Kindergarten Readiness. Poster presentation at the National Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference. Atlanta, Georgia.

Leffler, J., Harris, T., & Young, K. (2017, October). Play it Smart. Invited keynote presentation at the Imagine Conference. Jackson, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2017, October). MsECA Leadership Symposium. Invited pre-conference seminar at the Imagine Conference. Jackson, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2017, June). Relationships: The Context for Learning. Invited workshop at the Mississippi Early Childhood Association Regional Conference. Oxford, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2017, June). Understanding Children's Behaviors. Invited keynote presentation at the Mississippi Early Childhood Association Regional Conference. Oxford, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2017, March). Leadership Summit. Presented at the Southern Early Childhood Association Conference. Biloxi, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2017, March). Supporting Early Literacy Behaviors in the Early Childhood Classroom. Presented at the LiftEd Innovation in Literacy Conference. Jackson, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2016, November). Are Your Children Ready? Featured session presented at the Jackson Association on Children Under Six Lunch and Learn. Jackson, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2016, September). Jazzing Up Relationships. Featured session presented at the Georgia Association on Young Children Annual Conference. Lawrenceville, Georgia.

Leffler, J. (2016, September). Getting Ready for Kindergarten. Georgia Association on Young Children Annual Conference. Lawrenceville, Georgia.

Leffler, J. (2016, June). Supporting Emergent Literacy and Early Literacy Behaviors in the Preschool Classroom. NAEYC's National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development. Baltimore, Maryland.

Leffler, J. & Herring, A. (2015, November). Early Childhood Education: Stakeholders' Perspectives about Kindergarten Readiness. National Association for the Education of Young Children Annual Conference. Orlando, Florida.

Leffler, J. (2015, June). Relationships: The Heart of Healthy Development. Invited keynote presented at the Blast Off Conference. Oxford, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2014, January). Ten Essential Skills for Every Leader. Presented at the Southern Early Childhood Association Annual Conference. Williamsburg, Virginia.

Leffler, J. & Darling, L. (2012, October). Early Learning Standards/ Common Core State Standards Overview. Presented for the Stone County Excel by 5 Coalition meeting. Perkinston, Mississippi.

Herring, A., Leffler, J., Pegues, B., Burgess, A., & Brookes, S. (2012, June). The Tale of the Hercules Beetle. Paper presented at the National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, Indianapolis, IN.

Leffler, J. (2012, February). Inviting Parents and Children to the Literacy Club. Presented at the Southern Early Childhood Association Annual Conference. San Antonio, Texas.

Leffler, J. (2011, July). Inviting Parents and Children to the Literacy Club. Presented at the Rankin County Child Care Directors Association Annual Conference. Brandon, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2011, July). Seven Things Anyone Can Do to Improve Their Leadership. Presented at the Pine Belt Directors Association Annual Conference. Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Leffler, J. (2008, October). Physical Environment: Tips to Improve your ECERS-R Scores. Presented at the Mississippi Early Childhood Association Annual Conference. Jackson, Mississippi.

#### **HONORS & AWARDS:**

2023 Leadership Lauderdale, East Mississippi Business Development Corporation

2022 Donald Zacharias Early Career Undergraduate Teaching Excellence Award, Mississippi State University

2022 Donnie Prisock Diversity Award for the College of Education, Mississippi State University

2021 Foil-Wyatt New Faculty Advising Award, Mississippi State University

2021 Grow Your Own Network Fellow with the Education Policy Program at New America, Washington, D.C.

2020 Clyde Muse Service Award for the College of Education, Mississippi State University

July 2024

- 2020 Scholarship of Engagement Award for Any Given Child Meridian Initiative by the Center for Community-Engaged Learning, Mississippi State University
- 2020 Research Award for the Meridian Campus by the Office of Research and Economic Development, Mississippi State University
- 2020 Nomination by the Mississippi Early Childhood Association for the Southern Early Childhood Association Outstanding Member Award
- 2020 Mississippi Association of Partners in Education Governor's Award of Distinction (University Level) for the Any Given Child Initiative
- 2019 Hardin Scholar (2<sup>nd</sup> cohort) with the Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning at the University of Mississippi. Participation in this three-year program for early childhood higher education faculty was awarded through a competitive process.
- 2019 Nomination for the Microsoft Research Faculty Fellowship
- 2017 Nomination to run for president of the Southern Early Childhood Association.
- 2017 Education Policy Fellow with the John C. Stennis Institute of Government. Participation in this Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP) was awarded through a competitive process.
- 2016 Hardin Scholar with the Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning at the University of Mississippi. Participation in this three-year program for early childhood higher education faculty was awarded through a competitive process.
- 2014 MsECA Award by the Mississippi Early Childhood Association for the significant contributions to the education and welfare of young children. This is the state association's highest award.
- 2013 Quality Award by the College of Education and Psychology at the University of Southern Mississippi for leading the Center for Child Development in earning the 5-star (out of 5) rating with the Mississippi Child Care Quality Step System.
- 2010 Member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society by election of the chapter at Mississippi State University.
- 2010 Hannah Meadors Scholarship for graduate studies in early childhood education awarded by the Mississippi Early Childhood Association.

- 2009 ETS Recognition of Excellence, score on the *Praxis Series Principles of Learning and Teaching: Grades K-6* ranking within the top 15% of all test takers who took the assessment in previous years.
- 2000 Bertha M. Fritzsche Scholarship, for outstanding graduate student in early intervention.

**PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:**

- Mississippi Association of Educators
- Mississippi Early Childhood Association
- Mississippi Professional Educators
- National Art Education Association
- National Education Association
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Southern Early Childhood Association

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