

Working Together to Narrow The Digital Divide

Five key stakeholders joined forces to implement the nation's largest statewide 1:1 device initiative.

Getting computer devices into the hands of hundreds of thousands of public school students across Mississippi was no easy feat. It happened because the state Department of Education worked together with state policymakers, local school districts, technology vendors, and non-profit organizations to pull it off.

STATE POLICYMAKERS

State leaders in the legislature and executive branch made funding for the initiative a reality.

- State leaders acted quickly to approve \$200 million in funding
- Policymakers approved an exception from regular procurement procedures to allow for bulk purchasing through the state education agency



NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

A Mississippi-based nonprofit provided valuable resources to get the program off the ground.

- The [Mississippi Alliance](#) spearheaded the initial work to create a cost model for purchasing devices
- Advocated to policymakers for the need for comprehensive services beyond the distribution of devices



LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY

School districts could select their devices from a range of options provided by the State education agency.

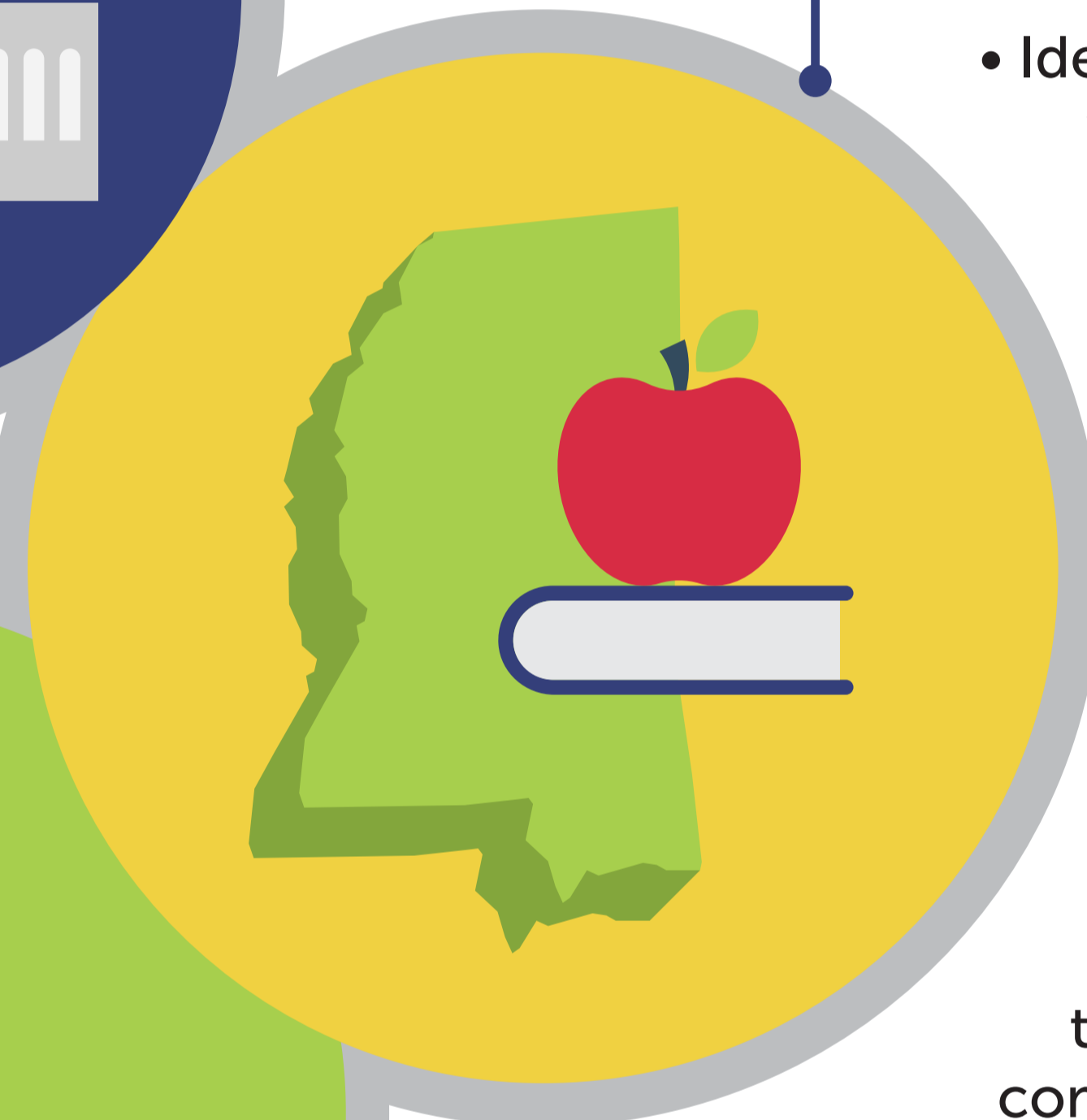
- District leaders chose the type of devices that best met their teaching and learning needs and submitted orders as part of the bulk purchasing program
- School districts had the option of ordering devices on their own
- Local education agencies continue to work with the Mississippi Department of Education on digital learning initiatives and professional development opportunities—including teacher coaching—for educators and staff



STATE EDUCATION AGENCY

The Mississippi Department of Education designed and coordinated the initiative.

- Identified areas in need of funding and worked with legislature and nonprofit organizations to secure necessary funds
- State superintendent arranged for the governor, lieutenant governor, and state speaker of the House to visit a warehouse where computing devices were configured and prepared for shipment. Local officials and media were invited to come and watch device deliveries to schools in their districts
- Mississippi Department of Education leaders worked with technology vendors to customize orders for districts. Ongoing communication with Local education agencies to address any questions or concerns that arose after the devices were delivered



TECHNOLOGY VENDORS

Oversaw bulk purchasing program and customization of learning-ready devices for all districts in the state

- Technology solutions provider [CDW•G](#) was responsible for contracting with districts, managing inventory and ordering of Windows devices, transporting the deliveries, and installing and configuring software to districts across the state
- Other hardware and software vendors, including [Intel](#), provided support for professional development and worked together to share best practices

