

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE
2012 Regular Session
To: Education
By: Senator(s) Tollison

Senate Bill 2454

(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-13-80, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR STUDENT DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND THAT THE OFFICE OF DROPOUT PREVENTION IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS UPON REQUEST; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. Section 37-13-80, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-13-80. (1) There is created the Office of Dropout Prevention within the State Department of Education. The office shall be responsible for the administration of a statewide dropout prevention program * * *.

(2) The State Superintendent of Public Education shall appoint a director for the Office of Dropout Prevention, who shall meet all qualifications established by the State Superintendent of Public Education and the State Personnel Board. The director shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Office of Dropout Prevention and any other regulations or policies that may be adopted by the State Board of Education.

(3) Each school district shall implement a dropout prevention program approved by the Office of Dropout Prevention of the State Department of Education by the 2012-2013, and annually thereafter, school year.

(4) * * * Each local school district will be held responsible for reducing and/or eliminating dropouts in the district. The local school district will be responsible for the implementation of dropout plans focusing on issues such as, but not limited to:

(a) Dropout Prevention initiatives that focus on the needs of individual local education agencies;

(b) Establishing policies and procedures that meet the needs of the districts;

(c) Focusing on the student-centered goals and objectives that are measureable;

(d) Strong emphasis on reducing the retention rates in grades kindergarten, first and second;

(e) Targeting subgroups that need additional assistance to meet graduation requirements; and

(f) Dropout recovery initiatives that focus on students age seventeen (17) through twenty-one (21), who dropped out of school.

(5) The Office of Dropout Prevention may provide technical assistance upon written request by the local school district. The Office of Dropout Prevention will collaborate with program offices within the Mississippi

Department of Education to develop and implement policies and initiatives to reduce the state's dropout rate.

(6) Each school district's dropout prevention plan shall address how students will transition to the home school district from the juvenile detention centers.

(7) It is the intent of the Legislature that, through the statewide dropout prevention program and the dropout prevention programs implemented by each school district, the graduation rate for cohort classes will be increased to not less than eighty-five percent (85%) by the 2018-2019 school year. The Office of Dropout Prevention shall establish graduation rate benchmarks for each two-year period from the 2008-2009 school year through the 2018-2019 school year, which shall serve as guidelines for increasing the graduation rate for cohort classes on a systematic basis to eighty-five percent (85%) by the 2018-2019 school year.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2012.