

By: Representative Scott (17th)

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 435

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE AN ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS UNDER THE MINIMUM
2 EDUCATION PROGRAM TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMPLOYING
3 SOCIAL WORKERS; TO REQUIRE SOCIAL WORKERS EMPLOYED WITH SUCH FUNDS
4 TO BE APPROPRIATELY LICENSED; TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF
5 EDUCATION TO PROMULGATE RULES AND REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE
6 ACTIVITIES OF SUCH SOCIAL WORKERS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 SECTION 1. (1) Beginning with the 1999-2000 school year,
9 the State Department of Education shall allot sufficient funding
10 under the minimum education program to each school district for
11 the purpose of employing a social worker. The social worker in
12 each school district shall not replace any school counselor but
13 shall complement the support services available in the public
14 schools.

15 (2) The State Department of Education may increase the
16 number of social worker positions funded each year beyond the
17 requirements under subsection (1) as money is made available. Any
18 amount allotted for the purpose of employing social workers in
19 addition to the amount provided for under subsection (1) shall be
20 allocated to school districts on the basis of teacher units.

21 (3) Any individual employed by a school district with funds
22 allotted pursuant to this section must be appropriately licensed
23 as a social worker under Sections 73-53-1 through 73-53-29. The
24 State Board of Education shall establish the minimum certification
25 that a social worker must hold in order to qualify for employment
26 in a position funded under this section.

27 (4) To qualify for minimum program funding, school social
28 workers must be full-time professional personnel and must spend at

29 least seventy-five percent (75%) of their work time in a direct
30 relationship with students and, in their discretion, the families
31 of students with whom they are working. School social workers may
32 not devote more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the work day to
33 administrative activities related to their social work.

34 (5) Each school district is encouraged to annually apply for
35 any available funding, including federal funding, for the purpose
36 of employing school social workers. Nothing in this section shall
37 prohibit a school district from employing additional social
38 workers with nonminimum program funds.

39 (6) The State Department of Education shall adopt rules and
40 regulations regarding the activities of the school social workers.
41 The rules and regulations shall authorize school social workers
42 to work with students and their families in the home environment
43 of the students and to collaborate with other support service
44 providers working with those families. School social workers may
45 perform any services that are not inconsistent with such rules and
46 regulations.

47 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
48 and after July 1, 1999.