

By: Representatives Scott (17th), Barnett
(92nd), Broomfield, Chaney, Coleman (65th),
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To: Education;
Appropriations

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 973

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
2 IMPLEMENT A PILOT PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FAMILY
3 SUPPORT CENTERS AND PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE
4 GOAL OF FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS AND PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS SHALL
5 BE TO CREATE A BETTER LIFE FOR MISSISSIPPI FAMILIES AND CHILDREN;
6 TO SPECIFY CERTAIN PROGRAMS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH FAMILY
7 SUPPORT CENTERS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH AN
8 APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO
9 REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO GIVE PRIORITY TO APPLICANTS FROM LEVELS
10 I AND II SCHOOL DISTRICTS; TO REQUIRE APPLICANTS TO HAVE IN PLACE
11 AN ADVISORY BOARD FOR THE FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER; TO AUTHORIZE THE
12 DEPARTMENT TO USE AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR GRANTS TO PARTICIPATING
13 FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO APPOINT AN
14 ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN PROMULGATING
15 REGULATIONS FOR THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO
16 RECOMMEND TO THE LEGISLATURE WHETHER OR NOT THE PROGRAM SHOULD BE
17 PERMANENTLY ESTABLISHED; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

19 SECTION 1. (1) The State Department of Education, in its
20 discretion, may develop and implement a pilot program to assist in
21 the establishment of community-based family support centers and
22 individual family or parent education services. The goal of the
23 programs shall be to create a better life for families and
24 children in Mississippi, with emphasis being placed on the
25 emotional, physical, social and mental needs of the whole family.
26 The family support centers and family or parent education service
27 programs shall provide parents with opportunities to voluntarily
28 obtain support and services that will enable them to provide
29 optimum learning environments for their children, particularly
30 from birth to the age of three (3) years, within the home. The
31 family support centers shall serve to build community networks to
32 support children and families through the implementation of the
33 following care activities: parenting classes; developmental

34 programs for prekindergarten-age children during parent education
35 classes; support groups; individual family or parent education
36 services; a resource library; and resource and referral services.

37 Additional services may be provided to meet the identified family
38 needs of the community and in keeping with the goals of the
39 program. The family support centers shall focus on school
40 readiness and early literacy.

41 (2) Under the pilot program, the department shall establish
42 a procedure for interested school districts and other nonprofit
43 entities in partnership with a school district to apply for
44 assistance in establishing a family support center. In selecting
45 school districts and nonprofit entities for the program, the
46 department shall give priority to applicants that are school
47 districts having Level I or II accreditation or other entities
48 situated within school districts accredited at Level I or II. At
49 least one (1) family support center shall be established in each
50 congressional district.

51 (3) Under the pilot program, the department shall establish
52 a procedure for interested school districts and other nonprofit
53 entities in partnership with a school district to apply for
54 individual family or parent education programs. Programs must use
55 research based, independently evaluated, proven research models
56 that are documented to have a positive impact on reducing special
57 education placements, development of language and social skills,
58 and parental involvement in schools.

59 (4) As part of the application process for participation in
60 the pilot program, applicants must demonstrate to the department
61 that the family support center is a collaborative undertaking of
62 various community organizations. Each applicant must have created
63 an advisory board for the family support center or parent
64 education services programs, involving the participation of the
65 local school district or districts, the city and county governing
66 authorities, the county health department, regional mental health
67 centers, the extension service, representatives of the Department
68 of Human Services and any other private or public entities
69 participating in the partnership.

70 (5) The State Department of Education may accept any funds,

71 public or private, made available to the department for the pilot
72 program. The funds shall be used to award grants to the
73 participating family support centers or family or parent education
74 services programs for the support of such programs. A family
75 support center or family or parent education services program may
76 use any available funding to support the administration and
77 programs of the center or education services program.

78 (6) The State Department of Education shall promulgate
79 rules and regulations necessary for the proper administration of
80 this section. An advisory group shall be established to assist in
81 the development of the rules and regulations for administration of
82 the program. Members of the advisory group shall include, but not
83 be limited to, representatives of the following categories:
84 parents; local school districts' parent education programs staff;
85 the Department of Human Services, Division of Family and
86 Children's Services; Head Start; the cooperative extension
87 services; and USOE funded parental assistance programs.

88 (7) If the family support center and family or parent
89 education services pilot programs authorized by this section are
90 implemented, the State Department of Education shall report to the
91 Legislature, within three (3) years after the pilot program's
92 implementation, on the desirability of expanding and permanently
93 establishing the program.

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