

By: Senator(s) Ferris

To: Education;  
Appropriations

## SENATE BILL NO. 2187

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE AN ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS UNDER THE MINIMUM  
2 EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE PURPOSE OF EMPLOYING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
3 GUIDANCE COUNSELORS BASED UPON STUDENT ENROLLMENT; TO PROVIDE AN  
4 ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS IN EACH SUBSEQUENT FISCAL YEAR UNTIL  
5 EACH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HAS EMPLOYED AT LEAST ONE COUNSELOR; TO  
6 AUTHORIZE SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO USE SUCH ALLOTMENTS TO EMPLOY SCHOOL  
7 SOCIAL WORKERS OR PUBLIC SCHOOL NURSES WITH APPROPRIATE  
8 CERTIFICATION; TO PROVIDE CERTAIN CONDITIONS ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF  
9 STATE-FUNDED SCHOOL GUIDANCE COUNSELORS AND TO PRESCRIBE THE  
10 COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED; AND FOR RELATED  
11 PURPOSES. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF  
12 MISSISSIPPI:

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14 SECTION 1. (1) Beginning with the 1999-2000 school year, in  
15 addition to other funds allotted under the minimum education  
16 program, each school district shall be allotted sufficient funding  
17 to employ one (1) elementary school guidance counselor, with  
18 funding for an additional elementary school guidance counselor to  
19 be allotted per fiscal year until each elementary school in the  
20 school district has one (1) state-funded school guidance  
21 counselor. However, until the time that there is a counselor in  
22 every elementary school at a counselor/student ratio of 1:500 or  
23 greater, the annual appropriation for elementary school guidance  
24 counselors shall not be reduced.

25 (2) The State Department of Education may, however, increase  
26 the number of positions funded each year beyond the above  
27 requirements as money is made available.

28 (3) Local school boards shall be authorized, in their  
29 discretion, to utilize such minimum program allotments to employ  
30 licensed social workers who possess a master's degree in social  
31 work and have had specific classes in individual and group

32 counseling as determined by the State Department of Education.  
33 Local school boards shall also be authorized, in their discretion,  
34 to utilize such minimum program allotments to employ public school  
35 nurses who possess a bachelor's degree in nursing as a minimum  
36 qualification.

37 (4) The assignment of state-funded school guidance  
38 counselors, social workers or public school nurses to the  
39 particular schools within the district shall be at the discretion  
40 of the local school board with the following restrictions:

41 (a) The counselor/student ratio shall be no greater  
42 than 1:500, or one (1) counselor per school building, whichever is  
43 greater;

44 (b) No individual shall be employed as a school  
45 guidance counselor, social worker or public school nurse without  
46 appropriate training and certification as determined by the State  
47 Department of Education; and

48 (c) State-funded school guidance counselors, social  
49 workers or public school nurses shall be full-time professional  
50 personnel, shall spend at least seventy-five percent (75%) of work  
51 time in a direct counseling relationship with pupils, and shall  
52 devote no more than one-fourth (1/4) of the workday to  
53 administrative activities.

54 (4) State-funded school guidance counselors shall provide  
55 the following comprehensive counseling services: (a) academic and  
56 personal advisement; (b) student assessment and assessment  
57 consultation; (c) career and educational planning; (d) individual  
58 and group counseling; (e) preventive classroom counseling  
59 activities and crisis intervention; (f) referrals to community  
60 agencies; (g) educational consultation with teachers,  
61 administrators, parents, and community leaders; (h) educational  
62 and career placement services; and (i) follow-up counseling  
63 services.

64 (5) Nothing in this section shall prohibit any school  
65 district from employing with local funds more school guidance  
66 counselors, social workers or public school nurses than are  
67 provided for in this section.

68 (6) The State Department of Education may adopt regulations

69 regarding the activities of the school guidance counselor, school  
70 social worker or public school nurse as are not inconsistent with  
71 this section.

72 (7) This section shall stand repealed from and after July 1,  
73 2003.

74 SECTION 2. All new programs authorized in this act are  
75 subject to the availability of funds specifically appropriated  
76 therefor by the Legislature.

77 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
78 and after July 1, 1999.