

By: Senator(s) Carter

To: Education;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2609  
(As Passed the Senate)

1 AN ACT TO DIRECT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH A  
2 PRE-KINDERGARTEN "PARENTS AS TEACHERS PILOT PROGRAM" IN THE SCHOOL  
3 DISTRICTS IN THE STATE TO ASSIST PARENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
4 LEARNING SKILLS OF THEIR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO AGE FIVE; TO SET  
5 FORTH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM; TO SET FORTH THE COMPONENTS  
6 OF THE PROGRAM; TO SET FORTH PROCEDURES FOR APPLICATION; TO  
7 PROVIDE FOR FUNDING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 SECTION 1. (1) The State Board of Education shall provide  
10 for the establishment of a pre-kindergarten pilot program in the  
11 public schools of Mississippi for children under the age of five  
12 (5) years, which shall be designated the "Parents as Teachers  
13 Pilot Program" following the procedures set forth in this section.

14 The Parents as Teachers Pilot Program shall provide parent  
15 education services, including resource materials on home learning  
16 activities, private and group educational guidance, individual and  
17 group learning experiences for the parent and child, and other  
18 activities that enable the parent to improve learning in the home.

19 The objectives of the Parents as Teachers Pilot Program shall be  
20 as follows:

21 (a) The program shall be an early childhood parent  
22 education and family support program designed to empower all  
23 parents to give their child the best possible start in life, based

24 on the philosophy that parents are their children's first and most  
25 influential teachers.

26 (b) The program shall be a home-school-community  
27 partnership providing parents with information on child  
28 development from birth to age five (5) which suggests learning  
29 opportunities that encourage language and intellectual growth,  
30 basic skills leading to reading instruction, and physical and  
31 social skills.

32 (c) The program shall be voluntary.

33 (2) Components of the Parents as Teachers Pilot Program  
34 shall include, but shall not be limited to:

35 (a) Personalized home visits by certified parent  
36 educators, trained in child development, who assist parents in  
37 understanding what to expect in each stage of their child's  
38 development, and recommend methods to encourage learning and  
39 promote strong parent-child relationships.

40 (b) Parent group meetings in which parents share  
41 concerns and successes and participate in group parent-child  
42 activities.

43 (c) Periodic screening services of the child's overall  
44 development, language, hearing and vision, in order to provide  
45 early detection of potential learning problems.

46 (d) Provide families with access to other early  
47 childhood services and related community services.

48 (e) A presentation of facts regarding the importance of  
49 a two-parent family to the child's emotional, mental and physical  
50 development, and the significance of the marriage of the child's  
51 parents in this development.

52 (3) The State Board of Education shall establish rules and  
53 regulations for the submission of school district applications for  
54 the Parents as Teachers Pilot Program and criteria and procedures

55 for the operation of the program by local school districts, which  
56 shall be consistent with standards established by the Parents as  
57 Teachers National Center, Inc. Every parent educator  
58 participating in the program shall meet certification standards  
59 established by the Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc. The  
60 State Board of Education shall receive and review applications for  
61 the program from local school boards and may award program funding  
62 to up to six (6) local school districts throughout the state, with  
63 one (1) district in each Mississippi congressional district as  
64 such districts exist on the effective date of this and at least  
65 one (1) local school district situated in the Delta region of the  
66 state, unless there are no applications submitted from a  
67 particular congressional district or the Delta.

68 (4) A Parents as Teachers Pilot Program may be funded by:  
69 federal funds, nonminimum or nonadequate education program school  
70 district funds, grants, gifts or donations from any private  
71 sources, and any state funds appropriated for the support of the  
72 Parents as Teachers Pilot Program. Any state funds shall be  
73 specifically appropriated for the purpose of supporting the  
74 Parents as Teachers Pilot Program.

75 (5) School districts that offer an approved Parents as  
76 Teachers Pilot Program shall be eligible for state reimbursement  
77 subject to appropriations therefor for each participating family.

78 If a school district fails or is unable to offer an approved  
79 program the district shall enter into a contract which meets the  
80 requirements of this subsection with another district or public  
81 agency offering an approved program for such services. If the  
82 district finds that no approved program is available in another

83 district or through public agencies, it shall request the State  
84 Department of Education to assist it in obtaining from an approved  
85 program services at the reimbursable rate. Costs of contractual  
86 arrangements shall be the obligation of the school district of  
87 residence of each preschool child. Costs of contractual  
88 arrangements shall not exceed an amount equal to an amount  
89 reimbursable to the school districts under the provisions of this  
90 section. No program shall be approved or contract entered into  
91 which requires any additional payment by participants or their  
92 parents or guardians. Payments for participants for Parents as  
93 Teachers Pilot Programs shall be uniform for all districts or  
94 public agencies.

95 (6) No person shall be required to participate in any  
96 Parents as Teachers Pilot Program.

97 (7) The State Board of Education shall evaluate the Parents  
98 as Teachers Pilot Program in participating school districts and  
99 shall report to the Legislature and the Governor on or before  
100 August 1, 2000, identifying exemplary programs and making  
101 recommendations regarding methods and criteria for funding such  
102 programs.

103 The State Department of Education shall develop an annual  
104 reporting process to inform the Legislature, local school district  
105 personnel and the general public as to all existing Parents as  
106 Teachers programs in the state:

107 (a) Number of students and families served;

108 (b) Number of teachers and other personnel,  
109 certification and experience levels;

110 (c) Source of funds for each program;

111           (d) Budget, administrative costs and other pertinent  
112 fiscal information;

113           (e) Salary and fringe benefit information for each  
114 employee in a Parents as Teachers program;

115           (f) Cost of materials and other instructional costs  
116 related to a Parents as Teachers program;

117           (g) Other information as directed by the State Board of  
118 Education; and

119           (h) Analysis of this program's impact on Grades K-3.

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