

By: Senator(s) Smith

To: Education

## SENATE BILL NO. 2656

1 AN ACT ENTITLED THE "MISSISSIPPI READING SUFFICIENCY ACT OF  
2 1999"; TO REQUIRE EACH STUDENT ENROLLED IN THE 3RD AND 4TH GRADES  
3 TO BE ASSESSED FOR THE ACQUISITION OF READING SKILLS, AND TO  
4 REQUIRE A PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION FOR THOSE FOUND NOT TO BE READING  
5 AT THE APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVEL; TO PRESCRIBE THE COMPONENTS OF THE  
6 PLAN, TO PROVIDE FOR SCHOOL READING ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES, TO  
7 PROVIDE FOR TUTORING AND TO PROVIDE THAT COPIES OF THE ASSESSMENT  
8 SHALL BE MADE PART OF THE PERMANENT RECORD OF EACH STUDENT; AND  
9 FOR RELATED PURPOSES. BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
10 STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

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12 SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the  
13 "Mississippi Reading Sufficiency Act of 1999."

14 SECTION 2. The purpose of the Mississippi Reading  
15 Sufficiency Act is to ensure that each child attains the necessary  
16 reading skills by completion of the Fourth Grade which will enable  
17 that student to continue development of reading skills and to  
18 succeed throughout school and life.

19 SECTION 3. (1) Beginning with the 1999-2000 school year,  
20 each student enrolled in Third and Fourth Grades of the public  
21 schools of this state shall be assessed by multiple on-going  
22 assessments for the acquisition of reading skills for the grade  
23 level in which that student is enrolled. Before the close of the  
24 current school year, any student, except for students who are on  
25 an individualized education program or have limited English  
26 proficiency, found not to be reading at the appropriate grade  
27 level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which will  
28 include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the  
29 student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills.

30 The plan shall include, but not be limited to:

31           (a) Sufficient additional in-school instructional time  
32 for the development of reading and comprehension skills of the  
33 student;

34           (b) If necessary, tutorial instruction after regular  
35 school hours, on Saturdays and during summer; and

36           (c) Utilization of teaching methodologies, including  
37 phonics and other methodologies in wide practice, as is determined  
38 appropriate by the reading assessment committee.

39           The student shall be reassessed at the conclusion of the  
40 program of instruction. The program of instruction shall continue  
41 until the student is determined to be reading at or above grade  
42 level. The student may continue to progress to the next grade  
43 level while the tutorial reading instruction continues.

44           (2) Each school site shall establish a committee composed of  
45 educators, which if possible shall include a certified reading  
46 specialist, to determine the reading assessment plan for each  
47 student for whom one is necessary. A parent or guardian of the  
48 student shall be included in the development of the reading  
49 assessment plan for that student. Every school district shall  
50 adopt and annually update a district plan which includes a plan  
51 for each site and which outlines how each school site will comply  
52 with the provisions of the Mississippi Reading Sufficiency Act.

53           (3) For any Fourth Grade student not reading at that grade  
54 level as determined by multiple assessments including a nationally  
55 recognized reading assessment given mid-year, a new reading  
56 assessment plan shall be developed as specified in this section  
57 and implemented. In addition to other requirements of this act,  
58 the plan shall include specialized tutoring and may include a  
59 recommendation as to whether the student should be retained in the  
60 Fourth Grade at the close of that year.

61           (4) Copies of the results of the assessment administered  
62 pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall be made a part of  
63 the permanent record of each student until the student is reading

64 on grade level so that the results of the next grade level  
65 assessment can be measured against the previous grade level  
66 results.

67       SECTION 4. Pursuant to appropriation by the Legislature  
68 specifically for such purpose, the State Department of Education  
69 shall provide in-service training, computer software and certified  
70 reading instructor personnel for training local school district  
71 certificated personnel to assist students and otherwise implement  
72 the provisions of this act.

73       SECTION 5. This act shall take effect and be in force from  
74 and after July 1, 1999.