

By: Warren, Holloway

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 902

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 37-3-81 AND 37-3-83, MISSISSIPPI
2 CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
3 ESTABLISH A SCHOOL SAFETY CENTER TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL AND CRISIS
4 ASSISTANCE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS, TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS
5 TO ADOPT COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL SAFETY PLANS, AND TO AUTHORIZE
6 SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS TO LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO FINANCE CERTAIN
7 PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE SCHOOL SAFETY; TO ESTABLISH A SCHOOL CRISIS
8 MANAGEMENT PROGRAM WITHIN THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, TO
9 PROVIDE FOR A TEAM OF PROFESSIONAL INDIVIDUALS TO RESPOND TO
10 TRAUMATIC OR VIOLENT SITUATIONS THAT IMPACT STUDENTS AND FACULTY
11 IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, TO PROVIDE PROCEDURES FOR THE OPERATION OF
12 THE PROGRAM, AND TO AUTHORIZE FUNDING FOR THE PROGRAM; AND FOR
13 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

15 SECTION 1. Section 37-3-81, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
16 amended as follows:

17 37-3-81. The Department of Education shall establish and
18 maintain a School Safety Center, which shall operate a statewide
19 information clearinghouse that: (a) provides assistance to school
20 districts and communities during school crises; and (b) provides
21 technical assistance, training and current resources to public
22 school officials and parents who need assistance in researching,
23 developing and implementing school safety plans and in maintaining
24 a safe school environment.

25 SECTION 2. Section 37-3-83, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
26 amended as follows:

27 37-3-83. (1) There is established within the State
28 Department of Education a School Safety Grant Program, available
29 to all eligible public school districts, to assist in financing
30 programs to provide school safety.

31 (2) The school board of each school district, with the

32 assistance of the State Department of Education School Safety
33 Center, shall adopt a comprehensive local school district school
34 safety plan and shall update the plan on an annual basis.

35 (3) Subject to the extent of appropriations available, the
36 School Safety Grant Program shall offer any of the following
37 specific preventive services, and other additional services
38 appropriate to the most current school district school safety
39 plan:

40 (a) Metal detectors;

41 (b) Video surveillance cameras, communications
42 equipment and monitoring equipment for classrooms, school
43 buildings and school buses;

44 (c) Crisis management/action teams responding to school
45 violence; * * *

46 (d) Violence prevention training, conflict resolution
47 training, and other appropriate training designated by the State
48 Department of Education for faculty and staff; and

49 (e) School safety personnel.

50 (4) Each local school district of this state may annually
51 apply for * * * school safety grant funds subject to
52 appropriations by the Legislature. School safety grants shall
53 include a base grant amount plus an additional amount per student
54 in average daily attendance in the school or school district. The
55 base grant amount and amount per student shall be determined by
56 the State Board of Education, subject to specific appropriation
57 therefor by the Legislature. In order to be eligible for such
58 program, each local school board desiring to participate shall
59 apply to the State Department of Education by May 31 before the
60 beginning of the applicable fiscal year on forms provided by the
61 department, and shall be required to establish a local School
62 Safety Task Force to involve members of the community in the
63 school safety effort. The State Department of Education shall
64 determine by July 1 of each succeeding year which local school

65 districts have submitted approved applications for school safety
66 grants.

67 (5) As part of the School Safety Grant Program, the State
68 Department of Education may conduct a pilot program to research
69 the feasibility of using video camera equipment in the classroom
70 to address the following:

71 (a) Determine if video cameras in the classroom reduce
72 student disciplinary problems;

73 (b) Enable teachers to present clear and convincing
74 evidence of a student's disruptive behavior to the student, the
75 principal, the superintendent and the student's parents; and

76 (c) Enable teachers to review teaching performance and
77 receive diagnostic feedback for developmental purposes.

78 * * *

79 (6) Any local school district may use audio/visual
80 monitoring equipment in classrooms for the purpose of monitoring
81 school disciplinary problems.

82 (7) The State Department of Education shall report annually
83 to the Chairmen of the Education Committees in the House of
84 Representatives and Senate on the operation of the School Safety
85 Center and the School Safety Grant Program, along with any
86 recommendations for expansion or revision of the program.

87 SECTION 3. (1) There is established a School Crisis
88 Management Program under the State Department of Education. Under
89 this program, the State Department of Education shall create an
90 office making available a quick response team of personnel trained
91 in school safety and crisis management to respond to traumatic or
92 violent situations that impact students and faculty in the public
93 schools in Mississippi. The School Crisis Management Program
94 shall operate in accordance with the following:

95 (a) The basic response team shall consist of those
96 personnel designated by the State Superintendent of Public
97 Education or their designees depending on the size of the school

98 and the nature of the event.

99 (b) In order to access the services of a response team,
100 the request must be made by the local school principal or the
101 superintendent of schools, who shall make the request to the State
102 Department of Education or its contact designee.

103 (c) The requesting school or school district shall
104 commit student time to the response team during the school day,
105 with students to be available to the team either individually or
106 in groups.

107 (d) A response team shall enter a school to work with
108 students and faculty for a period of no more than three (3) days,
109 unless otherwise requested by the school district.

110 (e) Response teams shall be organized on a regional
111 basis in order to provide immediate access to these services.

112 (f) The State Department of Education, or its contact
113 designee, shall operate a toll-free incoming wide area telephone
114 service for the purpose of receiving reports of suspected cases of
115 school violence and other traumatic situations impacting on
116 students and faculty in the public schools.

117 (g) Subject to the availability of funds specifically
118 appropriated therefor by the Legislature, the expenses of the
119 quick response teams and their administrative support shall be
120 provided from state funds. The State Department of Education may
121 apply for and expend funds for the support and maintenance of this
122 program from private and other funding sources.

123 (2) Local school districts, school superintendents and
124 principals may request and utilize the services of quick response
125 teams provided for under this section; however, this section does
126 not require school officials to request the services of quick
127 response teams.

128 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from
129 and after July 1, 2000.