

By: Burton

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2224

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE EACH STUDENT ENROLLED IN THE 4TH GRADE TO
2 BE ASSESSED FOR THE ACQUISITION OF READING SKILLS, AND TO REQUIRE
3 A PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION FOR THOSE FOUND NOT TO BE READING AT THE
4 APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVEL; TO PRESCRIBE THE COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN,
5 TO PROVIDE FOR SCHOOL READING ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES, TO PROVIDE
6 FOR TUTORING AND TO PROVIDE THAT COPIES OF THE ASSESSMENT SHALL BE
7 MADE PART OF THE PERMANENT RECORD OF EACH STUDENT; AND FOR RELATED
8 PURPOSES.

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

10 SECTION 1. The purpose of this act is to ensure that each
11 child attains the necessary reading skills by completion of the
12 Fourth Grade which will enable that student to continue
13 development of reading skills and to succeed throughout school and
14 life.

15 SECTION 2. (1) Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year,
16 each student enrolled in Fourth Grade of the public schools of
17 this state shall be assessed by multiple on-going assessments for
18 the acquisition of reading skills for the grade level in which
19 that student is enrolled. Before the close of the current school
20 year, any student, except for students who are on an
21 individualized education program or have limited English
22 proficiency, found not to be reading at the appropriate grade
23 level shall be provided a reading assessment plan which will
24 include a program of instruction in reading designed to enable the

25 student to acquire the appropriate grade level of reading skills.

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

27 (a) Sufficient additional in-school instructional time
28 for the development of reading and comprehension skills of the
29 student;

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

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

35 The student shall be reassessed at the conclusion of the
36 program of instruction. The program of instruction shall continue
37 until the student is determined to be reading at or above grade
38 level. The student may continue to progress to the next grade
39 level while the tutorial reading instruction continues.

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

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

56 Fourth Grade at the close of that year.

57 (4) Copies of the results of the assessment administered
58 pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall be made a part of
59 the permanent record of each student until the student is reading
60 on grade level so that the results of the next grade level
61 assessment can be measured against the previous grade level
62 results.

63 SECTION 3. Pursuant to appropriation by the Legislature
64 specifically for such purpose, the State Department of Education
65 shall provide in-service training, computer software and certified
66 reading instructor personnel for training local school district
67 certificated personnel to assist students and otherwise implement
68 the provisions of this act.

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