AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 37-101-13, 37-29-1 AND 37-29-63, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES TO OFFER ANY ACADEMIC OR VOCATIONAL TRAINING COURSE OR PROGRAM OF STUDY WHICH WOULD HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT UPON THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF MISSISSIPPI; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-101-13, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-101-13. It shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning to begin immediately a comprehensive study of the role and scope of all of the various institutions under its jurisdiction, including a detailed study of the programs of study, degrees and courses offered. Following the completion of such study, the board shall make such adjustments as may be found to be necessary in the programs of the various institutions, to the end that the broadest possible educational opportunities shall be offered to the citizens of this state without inefficient and needless duplication. The board shall, through such officers of the board and through such procedures as it shall see fit to establish, exercise continuing jurisdiction and control over the establishment of new courses of study, new departments and new functions and activities in each institution so that the growth and development of the program of higher education in the state shall proceed in an orderly and rational manner, inefficient and needless duplication may be avoided, and new expanded programs will be undertaken only as the same may become justified, based upon objective criteria to be established by the board. The board shall authorize any institution under its
jurisdiction to offer any academic or vocational training course
or program of study, the teaching of which, in the board's
determination, would have a positive impact upon industry and the
economic interests of the State of Mississippi. In carrying out
the purposes of this section, particular attention shall be given
to the extension programs of the various institutions. The board,
in conjunction with the chancellor and presidents of the
institutions of higher learning, shall take such steps as may be
necessary to improve and coordinate such programs and shall
exercise such direct control over the establishment, organization,
operation and granting of credit for such programs as may be
necessary to accomplish such purposes.

SECTION 2. Section 37-29-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
amended as follows:

37-29-1. (1) The creation, establishment, maintenance and
operation of community and junior colleges is authorized. From
and after May 1, 1998, community and junior colleges may admit
students if they have earned one (1) unit less than the number of
units required for high school graduation established by State
Board of Education policy or have earned a General Education
Diploma (GED) in courses correlated to those of senior colleges or
professional schools. They shall offer education and training
preparatory for occupations such as agriculture, industry,
business, homemaking and for other occupations on the
semi-professional and vocational-technical level. A community or
junior college may offer any academic or vocational training
course or program of study, the teaching of which, in the
determination of the board of trustees of the community or junior
college district, would have a positive impact upon industry and
the economic interest of the State of Mississippi. They may offer
courses and services to students regardless of their previous
educational attainment or further academic plans.
(2) The boards of trustees of the community and junior college districts are authorized to establish a dual enrollment program under which high school students meeting the requirements prescribed herein may enroll at a community or junior college while they are still attending high school and enrolled in high school courses. Students may be admitted to enroll in community or junior college courses under the dual enrollment program if they meet the following recommended admission requirements:

(a) Students must have completed a minimum of fourteen (14) core high school units;

(b) Students must have a minimum ACT composite score of twenty-one (21) or the equivalent SAT score;

(c) Students must have a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale, or better, on all high school courses, as documented by an official high school transcript; a home-schooled student must submit a transcript prepared by a parent, guardian or custodian with a signed, sworn affidavit to meet the requirement of this paragraph (c); and

(d) Students must have an unconditional written recommendation from their high school principal and/or guidance counselor. A home-schooled student must submit a parent, legal guardian or custodian's written recommendation to meet the requirement of this paragraph (d).

Students may be considered for the dual enrollment program who have not completed the minimum of fourteen (14) core high school units if they have a minimum ACT composite score of thirty (30) or the equivalent SAT score, and have the required grade point average and recommendations prescribed above.

Students admitted in the dual enrollment program shall be counted for minimum program funding purposes in the average daily attendance of the public school district in which they attend high school. Any additional transportation required by a student to participate in the dual enrollment program shall be the
responsibility of the parents or legal guardians of the student. Grades and college credits earned by students admitted to the dual enrollment program shall be recorded on the college transcript at the community or junior college where the student attends classes. The transcript of such college course work may be released to another institution or used for college graduation requirements only after the student has received his high school diploma.

(3) The boards of trustees of the community and junior college districts are authorized to establish an early admission program under which applicants meeting all requirements prescribed in subsection (2)(a), (c) and (d) and have a minimum ACT composite score of twenty-six (26) or the equivalent SAT score may be admitted as full-time college students if the principal or guidance counsellor of the student recommends in writing that it is in the best educational interest of the student. Such recommendation shall also state that the student's age will not keep him from being a successful full-time college student. Students admitted in the early admission program shall not be counted for minimum program funding purposes in the average daily attendance of the school district in which they reside, and transportation required by a student to participate in the early admission program shall be the responsibility of the parents or legal guardians of the student. Grades and college credits earned by students admitted to the early admission program shall be recorded on the college transcript at the community or junior college where the student attends classes, and may be released to another institution or used for college graduation requirements only after the student has successfully completed one (1) full semester of course work.

(4) In addition to the foregoing, the community and junior colleges shall provide, through courses or other acceptable educational measures, the general education necessary to individuals and groups which will tend to make them capable of
living satisfactory lives consistent with the ideals of a
democratic society.

SECTION 3. Section 37-29-63, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
amended as follows:

37-29-63. The president of any junior college shall have the
power to recommend to the board of trustees all teachers to be
employed in the district. He may remove or suspend any member of
the faculty subject to the approval of the trustees. He shall be
the general manager of all fiscal and administrative affairs of
the district with full authority to select, direct, employ and
discharge any and all employees other than teachers; however, the
board may make provisions and establish policies for leave for
faculty members and other key personnel.

The president shall have the authority, subject to the
provisions of Sections 37-29-1 through 37-29-273 and the approval
of the trustees, to arrange and survey courses of study, fix
schedules, and establish and enforce rules and discipline for the
governing of teachers and students. The president may recommend
to the board of trustees any academic or vocational training
course or program of study, the teaching of which, in the
president's determination, would have a positive impact upon
industry and the economic interests of the State of Mississippi.

He shall be the general custodian of the property of the district.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after July 1, 2001.