MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE  
REGULAR SESSION 2002

By: Representative Malone
To: Education; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1447

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A SPECIAL SCHOOL AT THE WALNUT GROVE YOUTH
2 CORRECTIONAL FACILITY; TO DESCRIBE THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND
3 CURRICULUM THAT MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SCHOOL; TO
4 PROVIDE THAT THE SCHOOL BOARD OF THE SPECIAL SCHOOL SHALL BE THE
5 WALNUT GROVE CORRECTIONAL AUTHORITY; TO REQUIRE THE SCHOOL BOARD
6 TO APPOINT A PRINCIPAL FOR THE SCHOOL; TO PROVIDE FOR FUNDING FOR
7 THE SPECIAL SCHOOL BY LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATION; TO PROVIDE FOR
8 THE EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION OF TEACHERS EMPLOYED BY THE
9 SPECIAL SCHOOL; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. There is created a special school for a special
population to be located on the grounds of the Walnut Grove Youth
Correctional Facility. The purpose of the special school is to
meet the educational needs of the juvenile offenders housed in the
facility by providing each student with an opportunity to develop
educational, vocational and living skills.

SECTION 2. (1) The program of education at the special
school must be designed to meet each student's individual
educational needs, regardless of the student's grade level. The
special school shall prepare a written Individual Education
Program (IEP) or portfolio for each student.

(2) The special school must meet appropriate State
Department of Education accreditation standards, as determined by
the State Board of Education. The special school will be a
special alternative program for a special population. Training in
the following areas must be included in the special school's
curriculum: computer literacy; workplace readiness; life skills;
drug and alcohol education; and physical education.

(3) The special school shall provide a program of general
educational development (GED) preparatory instruction, which
program must be administered in compliance with the rules and regulations established for such programs under Sections 37-35-1 through 37-35-11 and by the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges. The special school may administer the General Educational Development (GED) Testing Program under the policies and guidelines of the GED Testing Service of the American Council on Education. Upon a determination by the special school that it is in a student's best interest for that student to receive GED preparatory instruction, the special school shall assign the student to the GED program.

(4) The special school, in its discretion, may authorize postsecondary academic or vocational courses, or both, to be offered to students in the correctional facility who have been awarded a high school diploma or GED equivalent. However, no state funds may be expended to provide such course offerings unless the educational programs for Kindergarten through Grade 12 have been fully funded.

SECTION 3. The school board of the special school shall be the Walnut Grove Correctional Authority. The relationship between the correctional authority, as school board of the special school, and the State Board of Education shall be the same as that between other special schools in the state and the State Board of Education. The school board shall exercise the same powers, duties and responsibilities prescribed under Title 37, Mississippi Code of 1972, and by rules and regulations of the State Board of Education for all local school boards.

SECTION 4. (1) There is established the position of principal of the special school, which position must be filled by the appointment of the Walnut Grove Correctional Authority, as school board of the special school. The special school principal shall be directly responsible to, and shall serve at the will and pleasure of, the school board. The principal must possess the qualifications required of all school principals and any other
qualifications that may be specified by the school board or State Board of Education.

(2) The relationship between the special school principal and correctional authority, as school board of the special school, and the State Board of Education shall be the same as that between other special school principals and the State Board of Education.

(3) The school principal shall have the general responsibility for administering and supervising the educational programs of the special school. In addition, the principal shall have the specific duty of submitting the school's annual educational budget recommendations, as adopted in final form by the school board, to the State Board of Education. The budget must be based on any funds available to the school for educational purposes.

SECTION 5. Funding for the educational programs shall be by appropriation of the Legislature specifically for the educational programs at the Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Facility, and those funds may not be used for any other purpose at that facility or any other facility operated under contract with or by the Mississippi Department of Corrections.

SECTION 6. The school board and principal shall establish a salary schedule for teachers employed by the special school, with consideration given to the unique educational environment of the special school within a correctional facility. All teachers employed by the special school must possess a license to teach issued by the State Department of Education.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2002.