SENATE BILL NO. 2171

AN ACT TO PROVIDE THAT PREPARATION TO TEACH GRADES K-12 IN MISSISSIPPI SHALL REQUIRE AT LEAST ONE COURSE OF STUDY IN SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY SCHOOLS TO SPECIAL POPULATION STUDENTS UNDER THE FEDERAL I.D.E.A.; TO AMEND SECTION 37-17-8, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT’S IN-SERVICE STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLANS TO INCLUDE TRAINING FOR SUCH SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE REQUIREMENTS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Recognizing teaching as a profession, preparation to teach in Mississippi Kindergarten through Grades 12 shall include at least one (1) course of study in age appropriate services to be provided by schools to special population students as required by the federal I.D.E.A. law and state law and regulations. It shall be a requirement for any person to be certified as a teacher in Mississippi after July 1, 2003, that such person meet and comply with the requirements of this section.

SECTION 2. Section 37-17-8, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-17-8. (1) The State Board of Education, through the Commission on School Accreditation, shall establish criteria for comprehensive in-service staff development plans. These criteria shall: (a) include, but not be limited to, formula and guidelines for allocating available state funds for in-service training to local school districts; (b) require that a portion of the plans be devoted exclusively for the purpose of providing staff development training for beginning teachers within that local school district and for no other purpose; * * * (c) require that a portion of the school district’s in-service training for administrators and teachers be dedicated to the application and utilization of
various disciplinary techniques; and (d) require that a portion of

the school district's in-service training for administrators and
teachers be dedicated to the required services to be provided to
special population students under the federal I.D.E.A. law and
state statutes and regulations. The board shall each year make
recommendations to the Legislature concerning the amount of funds
which shall be appropriated for this purpose.

(2) Beginning with the 1998-1999 school year, school
districts shall not be required to submit staff development plans
to the Commission on School Accreditation for approval. However,
any school district accredited at Level 1 or Level 2 shall
include, as a part of any required corrective action plan,
provisions to address staff development in accordance with State
Board of Education requirements. All school districts, unless
specifically exempt from this section, must maintain on file staff
development plans as required under this section. The plan shall
have been prepared by a district committee appointed by the
district superintendent and consisting of teachers,
administrators, school board members, and lay people, and it shall
have been approved by the district superintendent.

(3) In order to insure that teachers are not overburdened
with paperwork and written reports, local school districts and
the State Board of Education shall take such steps as may be
necessary to further the reduction of paperwork requirements on
teachers.

(4) If any school district meets Level 4 or 5 accreditation
standards, the State Board of Education, in its discretion, may
exempt such school district from the provisions of this section.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from
and after July 1, 2002.