

By: Representative Formby

To: Education;  
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 512

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A BEST FINANCIAL  
2 MANAGEMENT PRACTICES REVIEW OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
3 TO IMPROVE MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGEMENT AND USE OF  
4 RESOURCES AND TO IDENTIFY COST SAVINGS; TO DIRECT CERTAIN STATE  
5 AGENCIES AND LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO COOPERATE AND ASSIST WITH  
6 THIS REVIEW; TO PROVIDE FOR A REPORT TO THE 2003 REGULAR SESSION  
7 OF THE LEGISLATURE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created a Task Force to Conduct a  
10 Best Financial Management Practices Review of the State Department  
11 of Education in order to improve the management and use of  
12 resources by Mississippi school districts and to identify cost  
13 savings. The membership of the task force includes the following  
14 nine (9) members: (a) the State Superintendent of Public  
15 Education, who serves as chairman of the task force; (b) the  
16 Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, the Chairman of the  
17 Senate Appropriations Committee and one (1) member of the Senate  
18 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; (c) the Chairman of the  
19 House of Representatives Education Committee, the Chairman of the  
20 House Appropriations Committee and one (1) member of the House  
21 appointed by the Speaker of the House; (d) one (1) local school  
22 superintendent appointed by the Lieutenant Governor; and (e) one  
23 (1) representative of the business community appointed by the  
24 Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Task Force to  
25 Conduct a Best Financial Management Practices Review of the State  
26 Department of Education shall study and submit to the Governor and  
27 the Legislature, for review and adoption, proposed revisions to  
28 the best financial management practices of the public school  
29 system which, at a minimum, shall instill public confidence by:



30 addressing the State Department of Education's and the local  
31 school districts' use of resources; identifying ways that the  
32 department and the local districts can save funds; and improving  
33 the department's and the local school districts' performance  
34 accountability systems. To achieve these objectives, best  
35 practices must be developed for, but need not be limited to, the  
36 following areas:

37 (a) Management structures, including the size of the  
38 department;

39 (b) Performance accountability;

40 (c) Efficient delivery of educational services,  
41 including instructional materials;

42 (d) Teacher recruitment, the Mississippi Teacher  
43 Center, the Critical Teacher Shortage Act, and employment of  
44 recruited teachers by local school districts;

45 (e) Administrative and instructional technology;

46 (f) Personnel systems and benefits management;

47 (g) Facilities construction and maintenance;

48 (h) Vocational-technical programs;

49 (i) Teacher certification;

50 (j) The Mississippi Adequate Education funding formula;

51 (k) The number and size of school districts and  
52 schools;

53 (l) Cost control systems and financial auditing of the  
54 department and school districts.

55 In areas for which the department or local school districts  
56 have not adopted the best practices, the task force may develop  
57 revised practices, with input from a broad range of stakeholders.

58 (2) The task force shall make a report of its findings and  
59 recommendations, including necessary legislation, to the  
60 Legislature, the Lieutenant Governor and the Governor for  
61 implementation in the 2004 Regular Session. The task force may  
62 recommend continuation of its review until the 2005 Regular



63 Session if it is unable to complete its responsibilities before  
64 the beginning of the 2004 Regular Session.

65 (3) The task force shall meet on the call of the chairman  
66 and shall organize by selecting from its membership a vice  
67 chairman, who also shall serve as secretary and shall be  
68 responsible for keeping all records of the task force. A majority  
69 of the members of the committee constitutes a quorum. All members  
70 must be notified in writing of all meetings, and the notices must  
71 be mailed at least five (5) days before the date on which a  
72 meeting is to be held.

73 (4) Legislative members of the task force shall be paid from  
74 the contingent expense funds of their respective houses in the  
75 same amounts as provided for committee meetings when the  
76 Legislature is not in session. Nonlegislative members of the task  
77 force who are not state employees or local school district  
78 employees shall be reimbursed for actual necessary expenses in  
79 attending called meetings of the task force, to be paid from any  
80 funds made available for such purpose by the Legislature.

81 (5) All agencies and divisions of agencies affected by this  
82 study and review must cooperate with the Task Force to Conduct a  
83 Best Financial Management Practices Review of the State Department  
84 of Education, specifically the State Department of Education, the  
85 Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and the  
86 State Board for Community and Junior Colleges, in formulating and  
87 preparing its recommendations.

88 (6) The task force may select a consultant or consultants to  
89 conduct the study mandated under this section, subject to specific  
90 appropriation therefor by the Legislature, and following the  
91 applicable regulations of the Personal Service Contract Review  
92 Board.

93 (7) The task force may utilize staff employed by the  
94 agencies and school districts affected by this study and any other  
95 assistance made available to the task force.



96           (8) Upon presentation of its final report, the task force  
97 shall be dissolved.

98           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
99 and after July 1, 2003.

