MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

By: Senator(s) Kirby

To: Education

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 2085

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-9-14, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO 1 AUTHORIZE SUPERINTENDENTS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO APPROVE THE PAYMENT 2 3 OF INVOICES FOR NOMINAL AMOUNTS OF BUDGETED EXPENDITURES WITH THE 4 SPECIFIC CLAIM TO BE APPROVED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD AT ITS NEXT MEETING; TO AMEND SECTION 37-37-1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO 5 б PROVIDE THAT SUCH PROCEDURE SHALL BE SUBJECT TO GUIDELINES ISSUED 7 BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF AUDIT; TO AMEND SECTION 37-7-301, 8 MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO; AND FOR RELATED 9 PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI: SECTION 1. Section 37-9-14, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

13 37-9-14. (1) It shall be the duty of the superintendent of 14 schools to administer the schools within his district and to 15 implement the decisions of the school board.

16 (2) In addition to all other powers, authority and duties 17 imposed or granted by law, the superintendent of schools shall 18 have the following powers, authority and duties:

19 (a) To enter into contracts in the manner provided by 20 law with each assistant superintendent, principal and teacher of 21 the public schools under his supervision, after such assistant 22 superintendent, principal and teachers have been selected and 23 approved in the manner provided by law.

(b) To enforce in the public schools of the school district the courses of study provided by law or the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and to comply with the law with reference to the use and distribution of free textbooks.

29 (c) To administer oaths in all cases to persons
30 testifying before him relative to disputes relating to the schools

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31 submitted to him for determination, and to take testimony in such 32 cases as provided by law.

33 (d) To examine the monthly and annual reports submitted
34 to him by principals and teachers for the purpose of determining
35 and verifying the accuracy thereof.

36 (e) To preserve all reports of superintendents,
37 principals, teachers and other school officers, and to deliver to
38 his successor or clerk of the board of supervisors all money,
39 property, books, effects and papers.

40 (f) To prepare and keep in his office a map or maps 41 showing the territory embraced in his school district, to furnish 42 the county assessor with a copy of such map or maps, and to revise 43 and correct same from time to time as changes in or alterations of 44 school districts may necessitate.

(g) To keep an accurate record of the names of all of 45 the members of the school board showing the districts for which 46 each was elected or appointed, the post office address of each, 47 48 and the date of the expiration of his term of office. All official correspondence shall be addressed to the school board, 49 50 and notice to such members shall be regarded as notice to the residents of the district, and it shall be the duty of the members 51 52 to notify such residents.

(h) To deliver in proper time to the assistant superintendents, principals, teachers and board members such forms, records and other supplies which will be needed during the school year as provided by law or any applicable rules and regulations, and to give to such individuals such information with regard to their duties as may be required.

59 (i) To make to the school board reports for each
60 scholastic month in such form as the school board may require.
61 (j) To distribute promptly all reports, letters, forms,
62 circulars and instructions which he may receive for the use of

63 school officials.

S. B. No. 2085 \*SSO2/R19CS\* 04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 2 64 (k) To keep on file and preserve in his office all
65 appropriate information concerning the affairs of the school
66 district.

67 (1) To visit the schools of his school district in his
68 discretion, and to require the assistant superintendents,
69 principals and teachers thereof to perform their duties as
70 prescribed by law.

(m) To observe such instructions and regulations as the school board and other public officials may prescribe, and to make special reports to these officers whenever required.

(n) To keep his office open for the transaction of
business upon the days and during the hours to be designated by
the school board.

77 (o) To make such reports as are required by the State78 Board of Education.

79 (p) To make an enumeration of educable children in his80 school district as prescribed by law.

81 (q) To keep in his office and carefully preserve the 82 public school record provided, to enter therein the proceedings of 83 the school board and his decision upon cases and his other 84 official acts, to record therein the data required from the 85 monthly and term reports of principals and teachers, and from the 86 summaries of records thus kept.

87 (r) To delegate student disciplinary matters to88 appropriate school personnel.

(s) To make assignments to the various schools in the district of all noninstructional and nonlicensed employees and all licensed employees, as provided in Sections 37-9-15 and 37-9-17, and to make reassignments of such employees from time to time; however, a reassignment of a licensed employee may only be to an area in which the employee has a valid license issued by the State Department of Education. Upon request from any employee

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98 (t) To employ substitutes for licensed employees, 99 regardless of whether or not such substitute holds the proper 100 license, subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as may 101 be adopted by the State Board of Education.

(u) To comply in a timely manner with the compulsory
education reporting requirements prescribed in Section
37-13-91(6).

105 (v) To perform such other duties as may be required of 106 him by law.

107 (w) To notify, in writing, the parent, guardian or 108 custodian, the youth court and local law enforcement of any 109 expulsion of a student for criminal activity as defined in Section 110 37-11-92.

111 (x) To notify the youth court and local law enforcement 112 agencies, by affidavit, of the occurrence of any crime committed 113 by a student or students upon school property or during any 114 school-related activity, regardless of location and the identity 115 of the student or students committing the crime.

116 (y) To employ and dismiss noninstructional and 117 nonlicensed employees as provided by law.

All funds to the credit of a school district shall be (3) 118 paid out on pay certificates issued by the superintendent upon 119 120 order of the school board of the school district properly entered upon the minutes thereof, and all such orders shall be supported 121 122 by properly itemized invoices from the vendors covering the materials and supplies purchased. All such orders and the 123 124 itemized invoices supporting same shall be filed as a public 125 record in the office of the superintendent for a period of five (5) years. The superintendent shall be liable upon his official 126 127 bond for the amount of any pay certificate issued in violation of 128 the provisions of this section. The school board shall have the \*SS02/R19CS\* S. B. No. 2085 04/SS02/R19CS

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power and authority to direct and cause warrants to be issued against such district funds for the purpose of refunding any amount of taxes erroneously or illegally paid into such fund when such refund has been approved in the manner provided by law.

133 (4) The superintendent of schools shall be special 134 accounting officer and treasurer with respect to any and all district school funds for his school district. He or his designee 135 shall issue all warrants without the necessity of registration 136 137 thereof by the chancery clerk. Transactions with the depositories 138 and with the various tax collecting agencies which involve school 139 funds for such school district shall be with the superintendent of schools, or his designee. 140

141 (5) The superintendent of schools will have no
142 responsibility with regard to agricultural high school and junior
143 college funds.

All agricultural high school and junior college funds shall be handled and expended in the manner provided for in Sections 37-29-31 through 37-29-39.

147 (6) It shall be the duty of the superintendent of schools to
148 keep and preserve the minutes of the proceedings of the school
149 board.

(7) The superintendent of schools shall maintain as a record 150 151 in his office a book or a computer printout in which he shall enter all demands, claims and accounts paid from any funds of the 152 153 school district. The record shall be in a form to be prescribed by the State Auditor. All demands, claims and accounts filed 154 155 shall be preserved by the superintendent of schools as a public 156 record for a period of five (5) years. All claims found by the 157 school board to be illegal shall be rejected or disallowed. All 158 claims which are found to be legal and proper shall be allowed and 159 ratified as paid by the superintendent of schools. The local 160 school board shall be authorized and empowered to promulgate rules 161 and regulations for the payment of claims by the superintendent of \*SS02/R19CS\* S. B. No. 2085 04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 5

162 schools in an amount not to exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) per claim, to be ratified by the school board after 163 payment has been made at its next regular meeting, pursuant to 164 165 guidelines issued by the State Department of Audit under Section 37-37-1. All claims as to which a continuance is requested by the 166 167 claimant and those found to be defective but which may be perfected by amendment shall be continued. The superintendent of 168 schools shall issue a pay certificate against any legal and proper 169 170 fund of the school district in favor of the claimant in payment of The provisions of this section, however, shall not be 171 claims. 172 applicable to the payment of teachers' salaries, salaries of drivers of publicly owned school buses, travel advances, amounts 173 174 due private contractors or other obligations where the amount 175 thereof has been previously approved by a contract or by an order of the school board entered upon its minutes, or for an amount 176 authorized to be paid by board policy, or by inclusion in the 177 178 current fiscal year budget, and all such amounts may be paid by 179 the superintendent of schools by pay certificates issued by him against the legal and proper fund without allowance of a specific 180 181 claim therefor as provided in this section, provided that the payment thereof is otherwise in conformity with law. 182

183 SECTION 2. Section 37-37-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is 184 amended as follows:

37-37-1. The Department of Audit of the Office of the State 185 186 Auditor of Public Accounts is hereby authorized and directed to prescribe and formulate for use by all school districts of this 187 188 state, including municipal separate school districts, adequate accounting systems and other essential financial records which 189 shall be uniform for all of the school districts of this state. 190 191 Such uniform system shall include a method of accounting for and keeping records of all funds received, handled and disbursed by 192 193 such school district, whether derived from taxation or otherwise, 194 including funds derived from donations, athletic events and other \*SS02/R19CS\* S. B. No. 2085

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special activities of the school district. The uniform system of 195 196 accounts so prescribed and formulated by the Department of Audit shall be distributed and disseminated to all of the school 197 198 districts of this state and it shall be mandatory that the boards 199 of trustees of all such school districts install, utilize and 200 follow said uniform system of accounts in keeping the financial 201 records of the school district. The State Department of Audit 202 shall issue guidelines for local school boards to follow in order 203 to authorize the prior payment of claims by the superintendent of schools for amounts not to exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars 204 205 (\$250.00) to be ratified by the school board after payment has 206 been made.

207 **SECTION 3.** Section 37-7-301, Mississippi Code of 1972, is 208 amended as follows:

209 37-7-301. The school boards of all school districts shall
210 have the following powers, authority and duties in addition to all
211 others imposed or granted by law, to wit:

(a) To organize and operate the schools of the district and to make such division between the high school grades and elementary grades as, in their judgment, will serve the best interests of the school;

(b) To introduce public school music, art, manual training and other special subjects into either the elementary or high school grades, as the board shall deem proper;

(c) To be the custodians of real and personal school property and to manage, control and care for same, both during the school term and during vacation;

(d) To have responsibility for the erection, repairing and equipping of school facilities and the making of necessary school improvements;

(e) To suspend or to expel a pupil or to change the placement of a pupil to the school district's alternative school or home-bound program for misconduct in the school or on school S. B. No. 2085 \*SSO2/R19CS\*

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property, as defined in Section 37-11-29, on the road to and from 228 229 school, or at any school-related activity or event, or for conduct 230 occurring on property other than school property or other than at 231 a school-related activity or event when such conduct by a pupil, 232 in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, 233 renders that pupil's presence in the classroom a disruption to the 234 educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best 235 interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a 236 whole, and to delegate such authority to the appropriate officials of the school district; 237

(f) To visit schools in the district, in their discretion, in a body for the purpose of determining what can be done for the improvement of the school in a general way;

(g) To support, within reasonable limits, the superintendent, principal and teachers where necessary for the proper discipline of the school;

(h) To exclude from the schools students with what
appears to be infectious or contagious diseases; provided,
however, such student may be allowed to return to school upon
presenting a certificate from a public health officer, duly
licensed physician or nurse practitioner that the student is free
from such disease;

(i) To require those vaccinations specified by the
State Health Officer as provided in Section 41-23-37, Mississippi
Code of 1972;

253 (j) To see that all necessary utilities and services 254 are provided in the schools at all times when same are needed; 255 To authorize the use of the school buildings and (k) grounds for the holding of public meetings and gatherings of the 256 257 people under such regulations as may be prescribed by said board; 258 (1) To prescribe and enforce rules and regulations not 259 inconsistent with law or with the regulations of the State Board 260 of Education for their own government and for the government of \*SS02/R19CS\* S. B. No. 2085 04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 8

261 the schools, and to transact their business at regular and special 262 meetings called and held in the manner provided by law;

(m) To maintain and operate all of the schools under their control for such length of time during the year as may be required;

266 (n) To enforce in the schools the courses of study and267 the use of the textbooks prescribed by the proper authorities;

268 To make orders directed to the superintendent of (0) 269 schools for the issuance of pay certificates for lawful purposes on any available funds of the district and to have full control of 270 271 the receipt, distribution, allotment and disbursement of all funds provided for the support and operation of the schools of such 272 273 school district whether such funds be derived from state 274 appropriations, local ad valorem tax collections, or otherwise. 275 The local school board shall be authorized and empowered to 276 promulgate rules and regulations for payment of claims by the superintendent of schools to be ratified by the board at its next 277 278 regularly scheduled meeting after payment has been made;

(p) To select all school district personnel in the manner provided by law, and to provide for such employee fringe benefit programs, including accident reimbursement plans, as may be deemed necessary and appropriate by the board;

(q) To provide athletic programs and other school activities and to regulate the establishment and operation of such programs and activities;

(r) To join, in their discretion, any association of school boards and other public school-related organizations, and to pay from local funds other than minimum foundation funds, any membership dues;

(s) To expend local school activity funds, or other available school district funds, other than minimum education program funds, for the purposes prescribed under this paragraph. "Activity funds" shall mean all funds received by school officials S. B. No. 2085 \*SSO2/R19CS\* 04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 9 294 in all school districts paid or collected to participate in any 295 school activity, such activity being part of the school program 296 and partially financed with public funds or supplemented by public 297 The term "activity funds" shall not include any funds funds. 298 raised and/or expended by any organization unless commingled in a 299 bank account with existing activity funds, regardless of whether 300 the funds were raised by school employees or received by school 301 employees during school hours or using school facilities, and 302 regardless of whether a school employee exercises influence over 303 the expenditure or disposition of such funds. Organizations shall 304 not be required to make any payment to any school for the use of any school facility if, in the discretion of the local school 305 306 governing board, the organization's function shall be deemed to be 307 beneficial to the official or extracurricular programs of the school. For the purposes of this provision, the term 308 309 "organization" shall not include any organization subject to the 310 control of the local school governing board. Activity funds may 311 only be expended for any necessary expenses or travel costs, including advances, incurred by students and their chaperons in 312 313 attending any in-state or out-of-state school-related programs, 314 conventions or seminars and/or any commodities, equipment, travel 315 expenses, purchased services or school supplies which the local school governing board, in its discretion, shall deem beneficial 316 317 to the official or extracurricular programs of the district, 318 including items which may subsequently become the personal property of individuals, including yearbooks, athletic apparel, 319 320 book covers and trophies. Activity funds may be used to pay travel expenses of school district personnel. The local school 321 governing board shall be authorized and empowered to promulgate 322 rules and regulations specifically designating for what purposes 323 324 school activity funds may be expended. The local school governing 325 board shall provide (i) that such school activity funds shall be 326 maintained and expended by the principal of the school generating \*SS02/R19CS\* S. B. No. 2085 04/SS02/R19CS

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the funds in individual bank accounts, or (ii) that such school 327 328 activity funds shall be maintained and expended by the superintendent of schools in a central depository approved by the 329 330 The local school governing board shall provide that such board. 331 school activity funds be audited as part of the annual audit 332 required in Section 37-9-18. The State Auditor shall prescribe a 333 uniform system of accounting and financial reporting for all 334 school activity fund transactions;

(t) To contract, on a shared savings, lease or lease-purchase basis, for energy efficiency services and/or equipment as provided for in Section 31-7-14, not to exceed ten (10) years;

339 (u) To maintain accounts and issue pay certificates on340 school food service bank accounts;

341 (v) (i) To lease a school building from an individual, 342 partnership, nonprofit corporation or a private for-profit corporation for the use of such school district, and to expend 343 344 funds therefor as may be available from any nonminimum program 345 The school board of the school district desiring to sources. 346 lease a school building shall declare by resolution that a need 347 exists for a school building and that the school district cannot 348 provide the necessary funds to pay the cost or its proportionate 349 share of the cost of a school building required to meet the 350 present needs. The resolution so adopted by the school board 351 shall be published once each week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper having a general circulation in the school district 352 353 involved, with the first publication thereof to be made not less 354 than thirty (30) days prior to the date upon which the school board is to act on the question of leasing a school building. 355 Ιf 356 no petition requesting an election is filed prior to such meeting as hereinafter provided, then the school board may, by resolution 357 358 spread upon its minutes, proceed to lease a school building. Ιf 359 at any time prior to said meeting a petition signed by not less \*SS02/R19CS\* S. B. No. 2085

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than twenty percent (20%) or fifteen hundred (1500), whichever is 360 361 less, of the qualified electors of the school district involved 362 shall be filed with the school board requesting that an election 363 be called on the question, then the school board shall, not later 364 than the next regular meeting, adopt a resolution calling an 365 election to be held within such school district upon the question of authorizing the school board to lease a school building. 366 Such 367 election shall be called and held, and notice thereof shall be 368 given, in the same manner for elections upon the questions of the issuance of the bonds of school districts, and the results thereof 369 370 shall be certified to the school board. If at least three-fifths (3/5) of the qualified electors of the school district who voted 371 372 in such election shall vote in favor of the leasing of a school building, then the school board shall proceed to lease a school 373 374 building. The term of the lease contract shall not exceed twenty (20) years, and the total cost of such lease shall be either the 375 376 amount of the lowest and best bid accepted by the school board 377 after advertisement for bids or an amount not to exceed the current fair market value of the lease as determined by the 378 379 averaging of at least two (2) appraisals by certified general 380 appraisers licensed by the State of Mississippi. The term "school 381 building" as used in this item (v) shall be construed to mean any 382 building or buildings used for classroom purposes in connection with the operation of schools and shall include the site therefor, 383 384 necessary support facilities, and the equipment thereof and appurtenances thereto such as heating facilities, water supply, 385 386 sewage disposal, landscaping, walks, drives and playgrounds. The 387 term "lease" as used in this item (v)(i) may include a 388 lease/purchase contract;

(ii) If two (2) or more school districts propose to enter into a lease contract jointly, then joint meetings of the school boards having control may be held but no action taken shall be binding on any such school district unless the question of S. B. No. 2085 \*SSO2/R19CS\* 04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 12 393 leasing a school building is approved in each participating school 394 district under the procedure hereinabove set forth in item (v)(i). 395 All of the provisions of item (v)(i) regarding the term and amount 396 of the lease contract shall apply to the school boards of school 397 districts acting jointly. Any lease contract executed by two (2) 398 or more school districts as joint lessees shall set out the amount 399 of the aggregate lease rental to be paid by each, which may be 400 agreed upon, but there shall be no right of occupancy by any 401 lessee unless the aggregate rental is paid as stipulated in the lease contract. All rights of joint lessees under the lease 402 403 contract shall be in proportion to the amount of lease rental paid 404 by each;

405 (w) To employ all noninstructional and noncertificated 406 employees and fix the duties and compensation of such personnel 407 deemed necessary pursuant to the recommendation of the 408 superintendent of schools;

409 (x) To employ and fix the duties and compensation of410 such legal counsel as deemed necessary;

(y) Subject to rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, to purchase, own and operate trucks, vans and other motor vehicles, which shall bear the proper identification required by law;

415 (z) To expend funds for the payment of substitute 416 teachers and to adopt reasonable regulations for the employment 417 and compensation of such substitute teachers;

418 To acquire in its own name by purchase all real (aa) 419 property which shall be necessary and desirable in connection with 420 the construction, renovation or improvement of any public school building or structure. Whenever the purchase price for such real 421 422 property is greater than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00), the 423 school board shall not purchase the property for an amount 424 exceeding the fair market value of such property as determined by 425 the average of at least two (2) independent appraisals by \*SS02/R19CS\* S. B. No. 2085 04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 13

certified general appraisers licensed by the State of Mississippi. 426 427 If the board shall be unable to agree with the owner of any such 428 real property in connection with any such project, the board shall 429 have the power and authority to acquire any such real property by 430 condemnation proceedings pursuant to Section 11-27-1 et seq., 431 Mississippi Code of 1972, and for such purpose, the right of 432 eminent domain is hereby conferred upon and vested in said board. 433 Provided further, that the local school board is authorized to grant an easement for ingress and egress over sixteenth section 434 435 land or lieu land in exchange for a similar easement upon 436 adjoining land where the exchange of easements affords substantial benefit to the sixteenth section land; provided, however, the 437 438 exchange must be based upon values as determined by a competent appraiser, with any differential in value to be adjusted by cash 439 440 payment. Any easement rights granted over sixteenth section land 441 under such authority shall terminate when the easement ceases to 442 be used for its stated purpose. No sixteenth section or lieu land 443 which is subject to an existing lease shall be burdened by any 444 such easement except by consent of the lessee or unless the school 445 district shall acquire the unexpired leasehold interest affected 446 by the easement;

(bb) To charge reasonable fees related to the educational programs of the district, in the manner prescribed in Section 37-7-335;

450 (cc) Subject to rules and regulations of the State 451 Board of Education, to purchase relocatable classrooms for the use 452 of such school district, in the manner prescribed in Section 453 37-1-13;

(dd) Enter into contracts or agreements with other school districts, political subdivisions or governmental entities to carry out one or more of the powers or duties of the school board, or to allow more efficient utilization of limited resources for providing services to the public;

S. B. No. 2085 \*SSO2/R19CS\* 04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 14 459 (ee) To provide for in-service training for employees 460 of the district. Until June 30, 1994, the school boards may 461 designate two (2) days of the minimum school term, as defined in 462 Section 37-19-1, for employee in-service training for 463 implementation of the new statewide testing system as developed by 464 the State Board of Education. Such designation shall be subject 465 to approval by the State Board of Education pursuant to uniform 466 rules and regulations;

467 (ff) As part of their duties to prescribe the use of textbooks, to provide that parents and legal guardians shall be 468 469 responsible for the textbooks and for the compensation to the 470 school district for any books which are not returned to the proper 471 schools upon the withdrawal of their dependent child. If a 472 textbook is lost or not returned by any student who drops out of 473 the public school district, the parent or legal guardian shall 474 also compensate the school district for the fair market value of 475 the textbooks;

476 (gg) To conduct fund-raising activities on behalf of 477 the school district that the local school board, in its 478 discretion, deems appropriate or beneficial to the official or 479 extracurricular programs of the district; provided that:

480 (i) Any proceeds of the fund-raising activities
481 shall be treated as "activity funds" and shall be accounted for as
482 are other activity funds under this section; and

(ii) Fund-raising activities conducted or authorized by the board for the sale of school pictures, the rental of caps and gowns or the sale of graduation invitations for which the school board receives a commission, rebate or fee shall contain a disclosure statement advising that a portion of the proceeds of the sales or rentals shall be contributed to the student activity fund;

490 (hh) To allow individual lessons for music, art and
 491 other curriculum-related activities for academic credit or
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04/SS02/R19CS PAGE 15 492 nonacademic credit during school hours and using school equipment 493 and facilities, subject to uniform rules and regulations adopted 494 by the school board;

(ii) To charge reasonable fees for participating in an extracurricular activity for academic or nonacademic credit for necessary and required equipment such as safety equipment, band instruments and uniforms;

(jj) To conduct or participate in any fund-raising activities on behalf of or in connection with a tax-exempt charitable organization;

502 (kk) To exercise such powers as may be reasonably 503 necessary to carry out the provisions of this section; and

(11) To expend funds for the services of nonprofit arts organizations or other such nonprofit organizations who provide performances or other services for the students of the school district.

508 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from 509 and after July 1, 2004.