

By: Representatives Carlton, Holloway,
Pierce

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 505

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-16-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND ISSUE
3 CRITERIA FOR A MISSISSIPPI OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA FOR STUDENTS
4 PLACED IN AN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL FOR NO LESS THAN ONE YEAR; AND FOR
5 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-16-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 37-16-11. (1) A student who has been properly classified,
10 in accordance with rules established by the state board as
11 "educable mentally retarded," "trainable mentally retarded,"
12 "deaf," "specific learning disabled," "physically handicapped
13 whose ability to communicate orally or in writing is seriously
14 impaired" or "emotionally handicapped" or placed in an alternative
15 school for no less than one (1) year shall not be required to meet
16 all requirements of Section 37-16-7, and shall, upon meeting all
17 applicable requirements prescribed by the district school board,
18 be awarded a special diploma in a form prescribed by the state
19 board; provided, however, that such special graduation
20 requirements prescribed by the district school board shall include
21 minimum graduation requirements as prescribed by the state board.
22 Any such student who meets all special requirements of the
23 district school board for his exceptionality, but is unable to
24 meet the appropriate special state minimum requirements, shall be
25 awarded a special certificate of completion in a form prescribed
26 by the state board. Nothing provided in this section, however,
27 shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of an
28 exceptional student solely to a special diploma. Any such student

29 shall, upon proper request, be afforded the opportunity to fully
30 meet all requirements of Section 37-16-7 through the standard
31 procedures established therein and thereby qualify for a standard
32 diploma upon graduation.

33 (2) The State Board of Education shall develop and issue
34 criteria for a Mississippi Occupational Diploma for students
35 having a disability as defined by the federal Individuals with
36 Disabilities Education Act. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school
37 year, any such student, upon proper request, shall be afforded the
38 opportunity to fully meet such requirements and qualify for an
39 occupational diploma upon graduation.

40 (3) The State Board of Education shall develop and issue
41 criteria for a Mississippi Occupational Diploma for students
42 placed in an alternative school for no less than one (1) year.
43 Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, any such student, upon
44 proper request, shall be afforded the opportunity to fully meet
45 such requirements and qualify for an occupational diploma upon
46 graduation.

47 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
48 and after July 1, 2005.