

By: Representative Pierce

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 824

1 AN ACT TO CREATE A COMMISSION TO STUDY AND REPORT ON ENHANCED
2 EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
3 AND EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF
4 MISSISSIPPI; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created a commission to study and
7 report on enhanced educational practices and programs to improve
8 student achievement and effective learning environments in the
9 public schools of Mississippi. The commission's study and report
10 shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

11 (a) Restructuring the high school curriculum with
12 emphasis on enhanced curriculum, graduation requirements and
13 promotion of dual enrollment and dual credit for college bound
14 students;

15 (b) Improving literacy in kindergarten through Grade 8
16 through the following:

17 (i) Providing children in kindergarten through
18 Grade 3 with skills needed to read proficiently and on grade level
19 by the end of the Grade 3;

20 (ii) Enhancing literacy in all subject matters
21 such as math, music, art and physical education; and

22 (iii) Requiring uninterrupted ninety (90) minute
23 daily blocks for reading and literacy in kindergarten through
24 Grade 4;

25 (iv) Incorporating character education in all
26 kindergarten through Grade 8 schools;

27 (v) Providing after school tutoring programs with
28 qualified tutors; and

29 (vi) Placing an emphasis on good attendance habits
30 as a means of drop out prevention;

31 (c) Establishing mentoring programs for new teachers;

32 (d) Improving professional development, especially in
33 Level 1 and Level 2 schools to improve those areas of weakness and
34 fostering partnerships between schools, community colleges and
35 universities for the delivery of professional development;

36 (e) Developing a professional development video for
37 distribution to all school districts; and

38 (f) Home rule and administrative efficiencies.

39 The commission shall make a report of its findings and
40 recommendations to the Legislature by November 1, 2005, including
41 any recommended legislation.

42 (2) The commission shall be composed of the following
43 fifteen (15) members:

44 (a) The State Superintendent of Public Education, or
45 his designee;

46 (b) A representative from the Institutions of Higher
47 Learning, to be appointed by the Commissioner;

48 (c) A representative from the State Board for Community
49 and Junior Colleges, to be appointed by the Chairman of the Board;

50 (d) Two (2) superintendents, one (1) to be appointed by
51 the Lieutenant Governor and one (1) to be appointed by the Speaker
52 of the House;

53 (e) Two (2) elementary school principals, one (1) to be
54 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and one (1) to be appointed
55 by the Speaker of the House;

56 (f) Two (2) high school principals, one (1) to be
57 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and one (1) to be appointed
58 by the Speaker of the House;

59 (g) Two (2) teachers, one (1) to be appointed by the
60 Lieutenant Governor and one (1) to be appointed by the Speaker of
61 the House;

62 (h) Two (2) school business administrators, one (1) to
63 be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and one (1) to be
64 appointed by the Speaker of the House;

65 (i) Two (2) school curriculum advisors/administrators,
66 one (1) to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor and one (1) to
67 be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

68 The Chairman of the House Education Committee and the
69 Chairman of the Senate Education Committee shall serve as
70 ex-officio members of the commission.

71 (3) Appointments shall be made within thirty (30) days after
72 the effective date of this act. The commission shall hold its
73 first meeting before August 1, 2005. At the first meeting, the
74 members of the commission shall elect a chairperson for the
75 commission.

76 (4) Members of the commission may not be compensated for the
77 performance of their duties. Any incidental costs associated with
78 conducting the study shall be paid by the State Department of
79 Education.

80 (5) To effectuate the purposes of this section, any
81 department, division, board, bureau, commission or agency of the
82 state or of any political subdivision thereof shall, at the
83 request of the chairperson of the commission, provide to the
84 commission such facilities, assistance and data as will enable the
85 commission to properly carry out its duties.

86 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
87 and after its passage.