

By: Senator(s) Carmichael

To: Education;  
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2417

1 AN ACT TO CREATE AND PROVIDE FOR A TASK FORCE TO STUDY AND  
2 REPORT ON THE FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL  
3 PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS IN MISSISSIPPI; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** (1) To assist the Legislature in developing and  
6 funding quality research-based prekindergarten programs, there is  
7 hereby established the "Task Force to Study and Report on the  
8 Funding and Implementation of Universal Prekindergarten Programs  
9 in Mississippi." The task force shall study and report on, at a  
10 minimum, the following:

11 (a) The effectiveness of prekindergarten programs that  
12 exist in other states;

13 (b) A review of the structure and administration of  
14 such programs;

15 (c) Funding mechanisms used in other states;

16 (d) Collaboration of providers to include public  
17 schools, Head Start, and private providers;

18 (e) Effective curricula and services;

19 (f) Facility requirements, nutrition services and  
20 transportation;

21 (g) Compilation and review of the prekindergarten  
22 services currently provided in Mississippi; and

23 (f) Any other issues determined by the task force.

24 (2) The task force shall be composed of the following  
25 members:

26 (a) House and Senate Education Chairmen;

27 (b) House and Senate Appropriation Chairmen;



28                   (c) House Public Health and Human Services and Senate  
29 Public Health and Welfare Chairs;  
30                   (d) State Superintendent of Education;  
31                   (e) Director, Mississippi Department of Human Services;  
32                   (f) Director, The Early Childhood Institute,  
33 Mississippi State University;  
34                   (g) A Representative of each public university's school  
35 of education appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education;  
36                   (h) A Representative of the state's Head Start Programs  
37 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;  
38                   (i) A Representative of the state's prekindergarten  
39 private providers appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;  
40                   (j) A local school superintendent appointed by the  
41 Speaker of the House of Representatives;  
42                   (k) A recognized expert in early childhood education  
43 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor;  
44                   (l) A business leader in the state appointed by the  
45 Governor.  
46           (3) Appointments shall be made within thirty (30) days after  
47 the passage of this act by the Legislature, and, within fifteen  
48 (15) days thereafter on a day to be designated by the State  
49 Superintendent of Education, the task force shall meet and  
50 organize by selecting from its membership a chairman and a vice  
51 chairman. The vice chairman shall also serve as secretary and  
52 shall be responsible for keeping all records of the task force. A  
53 majority of the members of the task force shall constitute a  
54 quorum. In the selection of its officers and the adoption of  
55 rules, resolutions and reports, an affirmative vote of a majority  
56 of the task force shall be required. All members shall be  
57 notified in writing of all meetings, such notices to be mailed at  
58 least five (5) days prior to the date on which a meeting is to be  
59 held.



60 (4) The task force shall have the authority to contract for  
61 any services necessary to complete its work and shall tour at  
62 least one nationally recognized successful prekindergarten program  
63 offered in another state. The Legislature shall fund the  
64 contractual cost and travel associated with attending meetings and  
65 for the onsite visit to an out-of-state prekindergarten program.

66 (5) Members of the task force who are not legislators, state  
67 officials or state employees shall be compensated at the per diem  
68 rate authorized by Section 25-3-69, Mississippi Code of 1972, and  
69 shall be reimbursed in accordance with Section 25-3-41,  
70 Mississippi Code of 1972, for mileage and actual expenses incurred  
71 in the performance of their duties. Legislative members of the  
72 task force shall be paid from the contingent expense funds of  
73 their respective houses in the same manner as provided for  
74 committee meetings when the Legislature is not in session;  
75 however, no per diem or expense for attending meetings of the task  
76 force will be paid while the Legislature is in session. No task  
77 force member may incur per diem, travel or other expenses unless  
78 previously authorized by vote, at a meeting of the task force,  
79 which action shall be recorded in the official minutes of the  
80 meeting. Nonlegislative members shall be paid from any funds made  
81 available to the committee for that purpose.

82 (6) The State Department of Education and the Department of  
83 Human Services shall jointly provide staff to assist the task  
84 force with carrying out its work. The task force shall, no later  
85 than January 2, 2009, submit to the Legislature and the Governor a  
86 report of its findings and recommendations to implement and fund a  
87 comprehensive prekindergarten program in Mississippi. Upon  
88 presentation of its report to the 2009 Regular Session, the task  
89 force shall be dissolved.

90 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
91 and after July 1, 2008.

