

By: Senator(s) Parker

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2296

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-71, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PROVIDE
3 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ANY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR THE
4 RECRUITMENT, PLACEMENT AND CURRICULUM SUPPORT FOR DYSLEXIA THERAPY
5 SERVICES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-106-71, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 37-106-71. (1) There is established the Mississippi
10 Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program for the purpose of
11 identifying and recruiting qualified university and college
12 students from the state for schooling in education with a focus on
13 dyslexia therapy.

14 (2) The receipt of a forgivable loan under the program shall
15 be solely limited to those students who are enrolled in or who
16 have been accepted for enrollment into a master's degree program
17 of study for dyslexia therapy at any public or private institution
18 of higher learning within the State of Mississippi at the time an
19 application for a forgivable loan is filed with the board.



20 (3) The annual amount of the forgivable loan award shall be
21 equal to the total cost for tuition, materials and fees at the
22 college or university in which the student is enrolled. Awards
23 made to nonresidents of the state shall not include any amount
24 assessed by the college or university for out-of-state tuition.

25 (4) Upon completion of the master's program and licensure
26 requirements, a forgivable loan recipient who has not been
27 previously licensed by the State Department of Education shall
28 render service as a licensed teacher of dyslexia therapy in a
29 public school district in the state.

30 (5) Repayment and conversion terms shall be the same as
31 those outlined in Section 37-106-53.

32 (6) The board shall prepare and submit a report to the
33 Legislature by January 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, outlining
34 in detail the number of participants who have received forgivable
35 loans under the program, the record of service provided by those
36 recipients as they transition out of the degree program into the
37 public school districts of this state, and the projection for
38 expanding the program to include more participants annually as
39 determined by the need for such qualified professionals in the
40 public school setting. Additionally, the report shall include a
41 summary of allocations and expenditures for the administration of
42 the program and the total amount of funds issued to recipients of
43 forgivable loans from the inception of the program until such time
44 as the report has been prepared and submitted to the Legislature.



45 (7) The Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan
46 Program shall be administered in the same manner as the Critical
47 Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan Program established under Section
48 37-106-55 and shall be incorporated into the Critical Needs
49 Teacher Forgivable Loan Program for all purposes.

50 (8) Funding for the establishment and continued operation of
51 the Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program shall
52 be administered by the board through a special fund established
53 within the Critical Needs Teacher Forgivable Loan Program. The
54 board may accept and receive monetary gifts and donations from any
55 source, public or private, which such funds shall be deposited in
56 the special fund for the benefit of the Mississippi Dyslexia
57 Education Forgivable Loan Program with the Critical Needs Teacher
58 Forgivable Loan Program.

59 (9) No more than twenty (20) students per cohort shall be
60 selected annually to be admitted into the program for receipt of
61 forgivable loans beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year.
62 However, forgivable loans awarded under the program shall be
63 provided only to students who have been accepted into a Dyslexia
64 Therapy Master's Degree Cohort Program approved by the State
65 Department of Education that provides instructional training as
66 required under Chapter 173, Title 37, Mississippi Code of 1972,
67 for dyslexia therapy in preparation of those cohort students for
68 AA licensure by the department.



69 (10) As part of the Mississippi Dyslexia Education
70 Forgivable Loan Program, the State Department of Education is
71 authorized and directed, subject to the availability of funds
72 specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature, to provide
73 financial assistance for the recruitment, placement and employment
74 of qualified licensed dyslexia therapy professionals identified
75 under Section 37-173-15(1) (b), Mississippi Code of 1972, in order
76 to provide dyslexia screening, evaluation and therapy services to
77 the students attending school in the school district. Said
78 funding may be used to purchase curriculum materials and supplies
79 for dyslexia therapy services. Said funding shall be provided to
80 public school districts upon application therefor regardless of
81 the financial need of the school district in an amount not to
82 exceed One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) annually. In
83 order to qualify for such funds, the school district shall meet
84 the following criteria:

85 (a) Use licensed dyslexia therapists or individuals
86 participating in an approved training program resulting in State
87 Department of Education licensure to provide dyslexia therapy to
88 students diagnosed with dyslexia;

89 (b) Use daily Orton-Gillingham-based therapy;

90 (c) Have school leadership trained in dyslexia; and

91 (d) Have a current School Program Verification and

92 Assurances form on file with the State Department of Education,

93 Office of Curriculum and Instruction.



94 Procedures and standards for the application for such funds shall
95 be established by regulations developed and issued by the State
96 Board of Education.

97 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
98 and after July 1, 2015.

