

By: Representative Crawford

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 959

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-23-147, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO REVISE THE PROCESS BY WHICH SCHOOLS PROVIDING FULL INCLUSION OF
3 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN ALL ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR
4 ACTIVITIES ARE RECOGNIZED; TO RENAME THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE AS
5 THE MISSISSIPPI SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL; AND FOR RELATED
6 PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-23-147, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
9 amended as follows:

10 37-23-147. (1) The State Department of Education shall
11 establish goals for the performance of * * * students with
12 disabilities that will promote the purpose of IDEA and are
13 consistent, to the maximum extent appropriate, with other goals
14 and standards for * * * students established by the State
15 Department of Education. Performance indicators used to assess
16 progress toward achieving those goals that, at a minimum, address
17 the performance of * * * students with disabilities on
18 assessments, drop-out rates, and graduation rates shall be
19 developed. Every two (2) years, the progress toward meeting the
20 established performance goals shall be reported to the public.



21 (2) To encourage the full inclusion of * * * students with
22 disabilities in all aspects of academic and extracurricular
23 activities, the State Department of Education * * * may provide
24 special recognition to the schools receiving such designation and
25 their school districts. Examples of such recognition may include,
26 but not be limited to: public announcements and events,
27 certificates of recognition and plaques for teachers, principals,
28 superintendents and parents, and media announcements utilizing the
29 services of Mississippi Educational Television. This special
30 recognition * * * may be awarded to * * * elementary, * * *
31 middle * * * or high schools, based on entries submitted to the
32 Mississippi Special Education Advisory * * * Panel by the
33 deadline * * * to be determined annually by the panel. These
34 entries shall be in the form of a report, * * * listing the name,
35 address and telephone number of the school district/school;
36 teacher or staff responsible for administering the program; type
37 of position held by each of these employees including credentials;
38 description of the program; number of students with disabilities
39 included; type and level of severity of disabilities; number of
40 students without disabilities involved in the program; how long
41 the program has been in operation; benefit of program to all
42 students; and a description of how this program could be
43 replicated by other school districts. Winners of the Exemplary
44 Inclusion Program contest shall be chosen annually by the



45 Mississippi Special Education Advisory * * * Panel at a date
46 determined by the panel.

47 Recognition * * * may be given to these schools during * * *
48 a meeting of the Mississippi State Board of Education * * * at a
49 date determined by the board. Information on these exemplary
50 programs shall be provided to other school districts and the
51 general public through news releases, the state department
52 website, and other similar avenues.

53 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
54 and after July 1, 2016.

