

By: Senator(s) Tollison

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2500
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS OF THE LUMBERTON
2 PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT, LAMAR COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND
3 POPLARVILLE SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT
4 NOT LATER THAN JULY 1, 2019, TO ABOLISH AND DISSOLVE THE LUMBERTON
5 SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ITS CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE, EFFECTIVE
6 AT THE START OF THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR; TO ESTABLISH A
7 COMMISSION ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION OF LUMBERTON PUBLIC
8 SCHOOL DISTRICT TO SUBMIT ITS PLAN OF ABOLITION AND DISSOLUTION TO
9 THE LEGISLATURE NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 1, 2017; TO PROVIDE THAT
10 THE TERRITORY OF THE LUMBERTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT LOCATED IN
11 LAMAR COUNTY SHALL BE TRANSFERRED TO THE LAMAR COUNTY SCHOOL
12 DISTRICT AND THE TERRITORY OF THE LUMBERTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
13 LOCATED IN PEARL RIVER COUNTY SHALL BE TRANSFERRED TO THE
14 POPLARVILLE SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT; TO PROVIDE THAT STUDENTS
15 ENROLLED IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE FORMER LUMBERTON PUBLIC SCHOOL
16 DISTRICT MAY BE GRANTED AN AUTOMATIC TRANSFER BY THE LAMAR COUNTY
17 BOARD OF EDUCATION OR THE POPLARVILLE SCHOOL BOARD, AS DETERMINED
18 BY THE RESIDENCE OF THE STUDENT, TO CONTINUE TO ATTEND THE SCHOOLS
19 LOCATED IN THE FORMER LUMBERTON PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT; TO AMEND
20 SECTION 37-7-103, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY THERETO;
21 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

23 **SECTION 1.** (1) Not later than July 1, 2019, the local
24 school boards of the Lumberton Public School District, Lamar
25 County School District and Poplarville Separate School District
26 shall, under the authority provided in Section 37-7-103, enter
27 into an agreement, by which the approval of such agreement shall



28 be spread upon each board's minutes of their regularly scheduled
29 meetings or at special meetings called for the specific purpose of
30 such agreement, to abolish and dissolve the Lumberton School
31 District and its central administrative office to be effective for
32 the start of the 2019-2020 school year. The agreement between
33 each school board made parties thereto must consider:

34 (a) The composition of the district boundaries of the
35 Lumberton Public School District, as it existed on January 1,
36 2016, to ensure that the student population to be transferred to
37 the Lamar County School District and Poplarville Separate School
38 District does not disparately impact the desegregation of either
39 school district entering into agreement;

40 (b) The territory embraced by Lumberton, Mississippi,
41 located within the bounded territory of Lamar County, from which
42 the school district to be abolished by agreement draws a portion
43 of its student population, shall be absorbed into the boundary
44 lines of the Lamar County School District, which shall spread a
45 legal description of the district's new boundaries upon its
46 minutes. It shall be the responsibility of the board of
47 supervisors of such county to apportion the school district into
48 five (5) new single-member board of education election districts,
49 which shall be consistent with the apportioned population of the
50 existing Lamar County School District and that portion of the
51 former Lumberton Public School District situated within Lamar
52 County as the former district existed on July 1, 2016. The board



53 of supervisors of the county shall thereafter publish the same in
54 some newspaper of general circulation in the county for at least
55 three (3) consecutive weeks and after having given notice of
56 publication and recording the same upon the minutes of the school
57 boards of each appropriate school district in the county, the new
58 district lines will thereafter be effective; and

59 (c) The territory embraced by Lumberton, Mississippi,
60 located within the bounded territory of Pearl River County, from
61 which the school district to be abolished by agreement draws a
62 portion of its student population, shall be absorbed into the
63 boundary lines of the Poplarville Separate School District as
64 added territory, which shall spread a legal description of the
65 district's new boundaries with added territory upon its minutes.
66 It shall be the responsibility of the municipal governing
67 authority having jurisdiction over the territory wherein the
68 Poplarville Separate School District is located to provide
69 residents of the added territory with representation on the school
70 board as authorized under the provisions of Section 37-7-203(1),
71 which shall be consistent with the apportioned population of the
72 existing Poplarville Separate School District and the percentage
73 of the student population from that portion of the former
74 Lumberton Public School District situated in Pearl River County
75 within the added territory of the Poplarville Separate School
76 District as the former district existed on July 1, 2016. The
77 municipal governing authority shall thereafter publish the same in



78 some newspaper of general circulation in the county for at least
79 three (3) consecutive weeks and after having given notice of
80 publication and recording the same upon the minutes of the school
81 boards of each appropriate school district in the county, the new
82 member districts will thereafter be effective; and

83 (2) (a) There is hereby created and established an advisory
84 council to be known as the Commission on the Administrative
85 Consolidation of the Lumberton Public School District. The
86 commission shall be composed of eleven (11) members as follows:

87 (i) The State Superintendent of Education, or his
88 designee, who shall serve as Chairman of the Commission;

89 (ii) The Superintendent of the Lumberton Public
90 School District;

91 (iii) The Superintendent of Education of the Lamar
92 County School District;

93 (iv) The Superintendent of the Poplarville
94 Separate School District;

95 (v) Two (2) members of the Lamar County Board of
96 Education to be appointed by the Lamar County Board of Education;

97 (vi) One (1) member of the Board of Trustees of
98 the Poplarville Separate School District to be appointed by the
99 Board of Trustees of the Poplarville Separate School District;

100 (vii) One (1) member of the Board of Trustees of
101 the Lumberton Public School District to be appointed by the Board
102 of Trustees of the Lumberton Public School District;



103 (viii) One (1) resident of the area which
104 comprises the Lumberton Public School District to be appointed by
105 the State Superintendent of Public Education;

106 (ix) One (1) resident of the area which comprises
107 the Lamar County School District to be appointed by the Lamar
108 County Board of Supervisors; and

109 (x) One (1) resident of the area which comprises
110 the Poplarville Separate School District to be appointed by the
111 Pearl River Board of Supervisors.

112 (b) The Commission on the Administrative Consolidation
113 of the Lumberton Public School District shall meet within thirty
114 (30) days of passage of this act upon the call of the State
115 Superintendent of Education and shall hold hearings and meet as
116 necessary and develop a report to the Legislature, the Governor
117 and the State Board of Education on or before December 1, 2017,
118 with the agreed-upon plan for proceeding with the abolition and
119 dissolving of the Lumberton Public School District, which shall
120 include a reasonable effort to maintain and operate a school in
121 the former Lumberton Public School District by which students
122 desiring may, in the discretion of the parents of such students,
123 attend.

124 (c) The plan may provide an option for students
125 enrolled in the schools of the Lumberton Public School District on
126 May 1, 2017, and children registered for kindergarten on that date
127 with the Lumberton Public School District may be granted an



128 automatic transfer by the Lamar County Board of Education or the
129 Poplarville School Board, as determined by the agreed-upon plan.

130 (3) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require
131 the closing or maintenance of any school or school facility,
132 unless the facility is an unneeded administrative office located
133 within a school district which has been abolished under the
134 provisions of this section.

135 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-7-103, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
136 amended as follows:

137 37-7-103. From and after July 1, 1987, the school board of
138 any school district shall have full jurisdiction, power and
139 authority, at any regular meeting thereof or at any special
140 meeting called for that purpose, to abolish such existing
141 district, or to reorganize, change or alter the boundaries of any
142 such district. In addition thereto, with the consent of the
143 school board of the school district involved, the school board may
144 add to such school district any part of the school district
145 adjoining same, and with the consent of the school board of the
146 school district involved, may detach territory from such school
147 district and annex same to an adjoining district. Provided,
148 however, that the consent of the school board of the school
149 districts involved in implementing the provisions of Section
150 37-7-104 or Section 37-7-104.2 or Section 37-7-104.3 or Section 1
151 of this act shall not be required for the administrative



152 consolidation of such school districts pursuant to the order of
153 the State Board of Education.

154 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
155 and after July 1, 2016.

