

By: Senator(s) Tollison

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2432  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-16-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO PROVIDE THAT THE SPECIAL MISSISSIPPI OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA FOR  
3 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES SHALL NOT BE AVAILABLE TO ANY STUDENT  
4 ENTERING THE NINTH GRADE IN THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR OR  
5 THEREAFTER; TO AMEND SECTION 37-16-17, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
6 TO PROVIDE THAT THE CAREER TRACK PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS NOT PURSUING  
7 A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE SHALL NOT BE AVAILABLE TO ANY STUDENT  
8 ENTERING THE NINTH GRADE IN THE 2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR OR  
9 THEREAFTER; TO AMEND SECTION 37-23-147, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
10 TO REVISE THE PROCESS BY WHICH SCHOOLS PROVIDING FULL INCLUSION OF  
11 STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN ALL ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR  
12 ACTIVITIES ARE RECOGNIZED; TO RENAME THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE AS  
13 THE MISSISSIPPI SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL; AND FOR RELATED  
14 PURPOSES.

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

16 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-16-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
17 amended as follows:

18 37-16-11. (1) A student who has been properly classified,  
19 in accordance with rules established by the State Board \* \* \*state  
20 board as ~~"educable person with an intellectual disability,"~~  
21 ~~"trainable person with an intellectual disability," "deaf,"~~  
22 ~~"specific learning disabled," "physically handicapped whose~~  
23 ~~ability to communicate orally or in writing is seriously impaired"~~  
24 ~~or "emotionally handicapped" shall not be required to meet all~~



25 ~~requirements of Section 37-16-7, and~~ of Education shall, upon  
26 meeting all applicable requirements prescribed by the district  
27 school board, be awarded a special diploma in a form prescribed by  
28 the state board; however, such special graduation requirements  
29 prescribed by the district school board shall include minimum  
30 graduation requirements as prescribed by the state board. Any  
31 such student who meets all special requirements of the district  
32 school board for his exceptionality, but is unable to meet the  
33 appropriate special state minimum requirements, shall be awarded a  
34 special certificate of completion in a form prescribed by the  
35 state board. Nothing provided in this section, however, shall be  
36 construed to limit or restrict the right of an exceptional student  
37 solely to a special diploma. Any such student shall, upon proper  
38 request, be afforded the opportunity to fully meet all  
39 requirements of Section 37-16-7 through the standard procedures  
40 established therein and thereby qualify for a standard diploma  
41 upon graduation.

42 (2) The State Board of Education shall develop and issue  
43 criteria for a Mississippi Occupational Diploma for students  
44 having a disability as defined by the federal Individuals with  
45 Disabilities Education Act. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school  
46 year, any such student, upon proper request, shall be afforded the  
47 opportunity to fully meet such requirements and qualify for an  
48 occupational diploma upon graduation.



49       (3) The special Mississippi Occupational Diploma for  
50 students with disabilities shall not be available to any student  
51 entering the Ninth Grade in the 2017-2018 school year or  
52 thereafter, pending State Board of Education approval of new  
53 graduation options.

54       **SECTION 2.** Section 37-16-17, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
55 amended as follows:

56       37-16-17. (1) Purpose. (a) The purpose of this section is  
57 to create a quality option in Mississippi's high schools for  
58 students not wishing to pursue a baccalaureate degree, which shall  
59 consist of challenging academic courses and modern  
60 career-technical studies. The goal for students pursuing the  
61 career track is to graduate from high school with a standard  
62 diploma and credit toward a community college certification in a  
63 career-technical field. These students also shall be encouraged  
64 to take the national assessment in the career-technical field in  
65 which they become certified.

66       (b) The State Board of Education shall develop and  
67 adopt course and curriculum requirements for career track programs  
68 offered by local public school boards in accordance with this  
69 section. The Mississippi Community College Board and the State  
70 Board of Education jointly shall determine course and curriculum  
71 requirements for the career track program.

72       (2) Alternative career track; description; curriculum. (a)  
73 A career track shall provide a student with greater technical



74 skill and a strong academic core and shall be offered to each high  
75 school student enrolled in a public school district. The career  
76 track program shall be linked to postsecondary options and shall  
77 prepare students to pursue either a degree or certification from a  
78 postsecondary institution, an industry-based training or  
79 certification, an apprenticeship, the military, or immediate  
80 entrance into a career field. The career track shall be designed  
81 primarily for those students who are not college bound and shall  
82 provide them with alternatives to entrance into a four-year  
83 university or college after high school graduation.

84 (b) Students pursuing a career track shall be afforded  
85 the opportunity to dually enroll in a community or technical  
86 college or to participate in a business internship or work-study  
87 program, when such opportunities are available and appropriate.

88 (c) Each public school district shall offer a career  
89 track program approved by the State Board of Education.

90 (d) Students in a career track program shall complete  
91 an academic core of courses and a career and technical sequence of  
92 courses.

93 (e) The twenty-one (21) course unit requirements for  
94 the career track shall consist of the following:

95 (i) At least four (4) English credits, including  
96 English I and English II.

97 (ii) At least three (3) mathematics credits,  
98 including Algebra I.



99 (iii) At least three (3) science credits,  
100 including one (1) unit of biology.

101 (iv) At least three (3) social studies credits,  
102 including one (1) unit of U.S. History and one (1) unit of  
103 Mississippi Studies/U.S. Government.

104 (v) At least one-half (1/2) credit in health or  
105 physical education.

106 (vi) At least four (4) credits in career and  
107 technical education courses in the dual enrollment-dual credit  
108 programs authorized under Section 37-15-38.

109 (vii) At least one (1) credit in integrated  
110 technology with optional end of course testing.

111 (viii) At least two and one-half (2-1/2) credits  
112 in additional electives or career and technical education courses  
113 required by the local school board, as approved by the State Board  
114 of Education. Academic courses within the career track of the  
115 standard diploma shall provide the knowledge and skill necessary  
116 for proficiency on the state subject area tests.

117 (3) Nothing in this section shall disallow the development  
118 of a dual enrollment program with a technical college so long as  
119 an individual school district, with approval from the State  
120 Department of Education, agrees to implement such a program in  
121 connection with a technical college and the agreement is also  
122 approved by the proprietary school's commission.



123       (4) The career track program for students not pursuing a  
124 Baccalaureate Degree shall not be available to any student  
125 entering the Ninth Grade in the 2017-2018 school year or  
126 thereafter.

127       **SECTION 3.** Section 37-23-147, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
128 amended as follows:

129       37-23-147. (1) The State Department of Education shall  
130 establish goals for the performance of \* \* \*children students with  
131 disabilities that will promote the purpose of IDEA and are  
132 consistent, to the maximum extent appropriate, with other goals  
133 and standards for \* \* \*children students established by the State  
134 Department of Education. Performance indicators used to assess  
135 progress toward achieving those goals that, at a minimum, address  
136 the performance of \* \* \*children students with disabilities on  
137 assessments, drop-out rates, and graduation rates shall be  
138 developed. Every two (2) years, the progress toward meeting the  
139 established performance goals shall be reported to the public.

140       (2) To encourage the full inclusion of \* \* \* children  
141 students with disabilities in all aspects of academic and  
142 extracurricular activities, the State Department of  
143 Education \* \* \*~~shall~~ may provide special recognition to the  
144 schools receiving such designation and their school districts.  
145 Examples of such recognition may include, but not be limited to:  
146 public announcements and events, certificates of recognition and  
147 plaques for teachers, principals, superintendents and parents, and



148 media announcements utilizing the services of Mississippi  
149 Educational Television. This special recognition \* \* \*~~shall~~ may  
150 be awarded to \* \* \*~~one (1)~~ elementary, \* \* \*~~one (1)~~  
151 middle \* \* \*~~school,~~ and ~~one (1)~~ or high schools, based on entries  
152 submitted to the Mississippi Special Education  
153 Advisory \* \* \*~~Committee for Special Education Panel~~ by the  
154 deadline \* \* \*~~of March 31~~ to be determined annually by the panel.  
155 These entries shall be in the form of a report, \* \* \*~~not to~~  
156 ~~exceed five (5) pages,~~ listing the name, address and telephone  
157 number of the school district/school; teacher or staff responsible  
158 for administering the program; type of position held by each of  
159 these employees including credentials; description of the program;  
160 number of students with disabilities included; type and level of  
161 severity of disabilities; number of students without disabilities  
162 involved in the program; how long the program has been in  
163 operation; benefit of program to all students; and a description  
164 of how this program could be replicated by other school districts.  
165 Winners of the Exemplary Inclusion Program contest shall be chosen  
166 annually by the Mississippi Special Education  
167 Advisory \* \* \*~~Committee for Special Education in April of each~~  
168 ~~year~~ Panel at a date determined by the panel.

169 Recognition \* \* \*~~shall~~ may be given to these schools  
170 during \* \* \*~~the May~~ a meeting of the Mississippi State Board of  
171 Education \* \* \*~~meeting each year~~ at a date determined by the  
172 board. Information on these exemplary programs shall be provided



173 to other school districts and the general public through news  
174 releases, the state department website, and other similar avenues.

175         **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
176 and after July 1, 2017.

