

By: Representatives Byrd, Criswell

To: Education; Revenue and
Expenditure General Bills

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 1037

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-173-15, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO PROVIDE THAT SCHOOL DISTRICTS PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE DYSLEXIA
3 EVALUATIONS AND PARENTS EXERCISING THE OPTION TO HAVE SUBSEQUENT
4 COMPREHENSIVE DYSLEXIA EVALUATIONS PERFORMED MAY BE ENTITLED TO
5 REIMBURSEMENT OF COST OF SUCH EVALUATION SUBJECT TO THE
6 AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE LEGISLATURE FOR SUCH
7 PURPOSES, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO \$1,000.00; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-173-15, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
10 amended as follows:

11 37-173-15. (1) (a) Each local school district shall adopt
12 a policy to ensure that students will be screened in the spring of
13 kindergarten and the fall of Grade 1. The component of the
14 screening must include:

- 15 (i) Phonological awareness and phonemic awareness;
- 16 (ii) Sound symbol recognition;
- 17 (iii) Alphabet knowledge;
- 18 (iv) Decoding skills;
- 19 (v) Encoding skills; and
- 20 (vi) Rapid naming.



21 (b) If a student fails the screener, the parent or
22 legal guardian will be notified of the results of the screener.
23 Subsequent dyslexia evaluations may be administered by licensed
24 professionals, including:

25 (i) Psychologists, licensed under Chapter 31,
26 Title 73, Mississippi Code of 1972;

27 (ii) Psychometrists, licensed by the Mississippi
28 Department of Education, and in accordance with Chapter 31, Title
29 73, Section 27, Mississippi Code of 1972; or

30 (iii) Speech Language Pathologists, licensed under
31 Chapter 38, Title 73, Mississippi Code of 1972.

32 (c) If a student fails the screener, the school
33 district, in its discretion, may perform a comprehensive dyslexia
34 evaluation, such evaluation must be administered by any of the
35 licensed professionals identified under paragraph (b) of this
36 subsection.

37 (d) If a parent or legal guardian of a student who
38 fails the dyslexia screener exercises the option to have a
39 subsequent evaluation performed, such evaluation shall be
40 administered by any of the licensed professionals identified under
41 paragraph (b) of this subsection, and the resulting diagnosis of
42 the subsequent evaluation must be accepted by the school district
43 for purposes of determining eligibility for placement within a
44 dyslexia therapy program within the current school or to receive a
45 Mississippi Dyslexia Therapy Scholarship for placement in a



dyslexia program in another public school or nonpublic special purpose school.

(2) The screening of all compulsory-school-age children enrolled in each local public school district for dyslexia required by subsection (1)(a) of this section shall in no manner nullify or defeat the requirements of the pilot programs adopted by the State Department of Education to test certain students enrolled or enrolling in public schools for dyslexia under Section 37-23-15.

(3) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated by the Legislature for the purposes required under paragraphs (c) and (d) of subsection (1) this section, the cost of the evaluation shall be reimbursed by the State Department of Education in an amount not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00). The department shall develop policies and procedures to administer the reimbursement program established under this subsection, and establish the criteria to be used in determining acceptable evaluations and qualifying evaluators used for which reimbursement is permitted.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2017.

