

By: Representative Scott

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 459

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE "TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MISSISSIPPI
2 TRAINING INITIATIVE" FOR SECONDARY, POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE
3 TRAINING STUDENTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE INITIATIVE SHALL BE
4 ADMINISTERED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE BOARD OF
5 TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING, IN CONJUNCTION
6 WITH THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY, WHICH
7 SHALL HAVE RULEMAKING AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY OVER THE
8 ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM; TO PRESCRIBE THE PURPOSE OF THE
9 INITIATIVE; TO ESTABLISH THE CRITERIA BY WHICH ELIGIBLE STUDENTS
10 WILL QUALIFY FOR PARTICIPATION AND THE METHOD OF SELECTION USED BY
11 THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES; TO PROVIDE
12 AN ANNUAL STIPEND TO STUDENTS SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
13 PROGRAM FOR EACH YEAR OF COMPLETION OF THE INITIATIVE; TO
14 ESTABLISH THE "MISSISSIPPI TRAINING INITIATIVE FUND"; TO REQUIRE
15 THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY TO MAKE A
16 PRESENTATION TO EACH HIGH SCHOOL IN EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT ON THE
17 TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MISSISSIPPI TRAINING INITIATIVE PROGRAM; TO
18 CREATE THE QUALIFIED SCHOOL PERSONNEL FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM TO
19 INCREASE THE AVAILABLE POOL OF HIGHLY-QUALIFIED AND WELL-TRAINED
20 TEACHERS IN THE STATE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

22 **SECTION 1.** (1) Beginning with the 2018-2019 academic school
23 year, the State Department of Education and the Board of Trustees
24 of State Institutions of Higher Learning, in conjunction with the
25 Mississippi Department of Employment Security, shall establish and
26 implement a program known as the "Twenty-first Century Mississippi
27 Training Initiative" for secondary, postsecondary and workforce



28 training students. The purpose of the program shall be developed
29 to:

30 (a) Stimulate interest in science, technology,
31 engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects, language arts,
32 critical thinking, education and the health care professions,
33 especially among underserved and underrepresented populations in
34 Mississippi's "D" and "F" rated school districts as determined by
35 the accountability ratings assigned to schools and school
36 districts by the State Department of Education;

37 (b) Increase awareness of the urgent need for health
38 care professionals in our state;

39 (c) Provide well-trained and highly-qualified teachers
40 to critical shortage areas and districts in need as determined by
41 levels of accreditation;

42 (d) Equip students for transitions directly into the
43 workforce through career-technical training and curriculum path;
44 and

45 (e) Raise graduation rates and ACT scores through
46 preparatory instruction.

47 (2) The introduction of students to any potential careers in
48 the STEM professions, education and health care professions
49 through the training initiative established under subsection (1)
50 of this section shall be conducted as a continuing nonresidential
51 apprenticeship program conducted at a satellite location in each
52 of the four (4) congressional districts as constituted on January



53 1, 2018, to be determined by the State Department of Education and
54 the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning.
55 Students shall first be eligible for selection for participation
56 in the program at the conclusion of Grade 9, at which time the
57 following criteria shall be considered:

58 (a) The student making application for participation
59 resides in a household with a household income not greater than
60 two hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty level;

61 (b) The student making application for participation is
62 the child of a parent receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy
63 Families (TANF) benefits;

64 (c) The student making application for participation
65 resides in a county with an unemployment rate in excess of ten
66 percent (10%) in any demographic; and

67 (d) Demonstrate substantial academic aptitude as
68 determined by satisfying the grade point average and minimum ACT
69 score established by the department and the board of trustees.

70 However, before any student is accepted for participation
71 under the criteria of this subsection, that student's parent,
72 legal guardian or custodian must submit written authorization,
73 agreeing to the student's participation in the academy.

74 (3) During the apprenticeship program each student selected
75 for participation shall be provided onsite hands-on instruction to
76 increase the student's preparation for a curriculum developed to
77 strengthen academic competitiveness in their chosen area of



78 concentration for STEM, education or medical and allied health
79 careers. The lecture-based portions of instruction in the academy
80 shall be conducted by instructors with adequate certification in
81 the applicable discipline who are licensed by the State Department
82 of Education or who teach those subject areas at the collegiate
83 level. Upon graduating from high school, each participant upon
84 enrolling in a publicly supported institution of higher learning
85 in the State of Mississippi, the student shall be paired with an
86 academic advisor in the area of program concentration to advance
87 his or her studies in the discipline undertaken during the
88 secondary school phase of program participation.

89 (4) The State Department of Education and the Board of
90 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall jointly
91 develop the criteria and process to be used in a random selection
92 of candidates to participate in the academy. The criteria and
93 process shall be nondiscriminatory in nature, and shall not refuse
94 admission into the academy on the basis of race, color, age,
95 disability, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation
96 or prior academic achievement.

97 (5) The Twenty-first Century Mississippi Training Initiative
98 shall be funded by the Mississippi Department of Employment
99 Security, which shall allocate Ten Million Dollars
100 (\$10,000,000.00) of the Workforce Training funds to State
101 Department of Education for the purpose of funding the program and
102 providing two-year scholarships to individuals qualifying for the



103 qualified school personnel forgivable loan program established in
104 Section 6 of this act.

105 (6) The Twenty-first Century Mississippi Training Initiative
106 shall consist of a full day of academic, research or laboratory
107 instruction beginning at 8:00 a.m. and lasting until 3:00 p.m.
108 daily on Monday through Friday of for eight (8) weeks during the
109 summer interim and a minimum of six (6) hours per week during the
110 scholastic year. During each week of the eight-week summer
111 program, two (2) afternoons shall be dedicated to ACT preparation,
112 and the remaining three (3) days shall be dedicated to career
113 preparation and volunteerism.

114 **SECTION 2.** Participants in the initiative shall be limited
115 to Mississippi residents who are entering Grades 10 through
116 completion of baccalaureate studies in a public school or
117 university, and who have submitted to the State Department of
118 Education a completed application on the form designed and
119 supplied by the department and the Board of Trustees of State
120 Institutions of Higher Learning. The department shall make
121 applications available to each school district on October 1 of
122 each year and shall establish the deadline for accepting
123 applications. Upon the closing date for acceptance of
124 applications, the department shall then forward the completed
125 applications to the Commissioner of Higher Education for review by
126 the Board of Trustees of State Institution of Higher Learning, who



127 shall determine the number of openings available for participation
128 in the initiative at each satellite location.

129 **SECTION 3.** Students selected to participate in the
130 initiative shall be provided, as an incentive to participate, a
131 stipend in a amount not to exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00)
132 for each year of completion of the initiative.

133 **SECTION 4.** There is established in the State Treasury a fund
134 to be known as the "Mississippi Training Initiative Fund." The
135 purpose of the fund is to provide financial support to local
136 school districts and the Board of Trustees of State Institutions
137 of Higher Learning for start-up costs and costs associated with
138 implementing and operating the Twenty-first Century Mississippi
139 Training Initiative. The fund shall consist of monies obtained
140 from grants from the federal government, funds allocated from the
141 Workforce Training Fund, funds made available by the Legislature,
142 and grants, gifts, devises and donations from any public or
143 private source. The State Board of Education and the Board of
144 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall administer
145 the fund and may apply for any grants from the federal government
146 or private sources.

147 **SECTION 5.** The Mississippi Department of Employment Security
148 shall be required to make a presentation to each high school in
149 each school district on the Twenty-first Century Mississippi
150 Training Initiative program established in conjunction with the
151 State Board of Education and the Board of Trustees of State



152 Institutions of Higher Learning. At a minimum the presentation
153 shall consist of an overview of the career options provided
154 through the initiative and alternatives to immediate enrollment in
155 college, if direct into the workforce through a career-technical
156 training and curriculum path is afforded through the school
157 district. The presentation offered shall not be less than thirty
158 (30) minutes.

159 **SECTION 6.** (1) There is established the qualified school
160 personnel forgivable loan program for the purpose of assisting
161 eligible school personnel who have successfully completed two (2)
162 years of college to become certificated teachers through the
163 awarding of forgivable loans and to encourage the completion of
164 four-year undergraduate studies in a education related field and
165 to increase the available teacher pool in the state. The
166 forgivable loan program shall be implemented and administered by
167 the Postsecondary Education Financial Assistance Board and is
168 subject to the availability of funds appropriated specifically
169 therefor by the Legislature.

170 (2) Under the qualified school personnel forgivable loan
171 program, qualified school personnel may be awarded financial
172 assistance in an amount that is equal to the actual cost of six
173 (6) three-hour academic courses per year. A qualified school
174 personnel forgivable loan shall not be based upon an applicant's
175 financial need, and the receipt of any other forgivable loan or



176 financial assistance shall not affect the qualified school
177 personnel's eligibility under the program.

178 (3) In order to qualify for a qualified school personnel
179 forgivable loan, an applicant must satisfy the following
180 requirements:

181 (a) The applicant must be employed full time as an
182 essential employee with a local school district;

183 (b) The applicant must be accepted for enrollment at a
184 baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher learning in
185 the State of Mississippi that is regionally accredited and
186 approved by the board and having completed a minimum of two-year
187 of coursework therein or at a community college in the State of
188 Mississippi;

189 (c) The qualified school personnel must maintain a
190 minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 calculated on a 4.0
191 scale for all courses funded through the qualified school
192 personnel forgivable loan program; and

193 (d) The qualified school personnel must have expressed
194 in writing a present intention to teach in a critical teacher
195 shortage geographic or academic subject area, or both, in a
196 failing school district as determined by a "D" or "F"
197 accountability rating assigned by the State Department of
198 Education.

199 (4) At the beginning of the school year next succeeding the
200 date on which a person who has received an qualified school



201 personnel forgivable loan obtains a baccalaureate degree, that
202 person shall begin to render service as a certificated teacher in
203 a school district or academic subject area, or both, in a failing
204 school district as determined by a "D" or "F" accountability
205 rating assigned by the State Department of Education, and
206 designated by the State Board of Education. The board shall
207 establish by rule and regulation the duration of teaching service
208 due for recipients of forgivable loans based upon the number of
209 academic hours funded through the qualified school personnel
210 forgivable loan program. Repayment and conversion terms shall be
211 the same as those outlined in Section 37-106-53.

212 **SECTION 7.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
213 and after July 1, 2018.

