

By: Representative Bennett

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 829

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-3-87, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 RECOMMEND A COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAMINATION FOR ALL STUDENTS PRIOR  
3 TO ENTERING OR ENROLLING FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A PUBLIC, PRIVATE  
4 OR PAROCHIAL SCHOOL; TO PROVIDE STANDARDS FOR REQUIRED EYE  
5 EXAMINATIONS; TO DIRECT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION WITH  
6 INPUT FROM THE MISSISSIPPI VISION FOUNDATION TO DEVELOP AND ISSUE  
7 REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR THE STUDENT EYE EXAMINATION  
8 PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-3-87, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
11 amended as follows:

12 37-3-87. (1) This section shall be known and may be cited  
13 as the "Mississippi Vision for Better Learning Program."

14 (2) Beginning July 1, 2018, prior to a student entering or  
15 enrolling for the first time in a Mississippi public, private or  
16 parochial school approved and accredited by the State Board of  
17 Education, every student should have a comprehensive eye  
18 examination performed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.  
19 Before the end of the first semester of the start of the school  
20 year, the parent or guardian of each student shall present, to the  
21 appropriate school personnel, evidence that the student passed an



22 eye examination within the previous six (6) months or a waiver by  
23 the parent or guardian of each student opting out of the eye  
24 examination. The State Department of Education, with the advice  
25 of the Mississippi Vision Foundation, on or before July 1, 2018,  
26 shall promulgate rules establishing the criteria for meeting the  
27 requirements of this comprehensive eye examination, which shall  
28 include, but not be limited to, the following:

29 (a) A measurement of visual acuity; ocular alignment  
30 and motility; depth perception-stereopsis; fusion; slit lamp;  
31 examination of the anterior segment, posterior segment and pupils;  
32 and cycloplegic refraction and dilated fundus examination when  
33 deemed appropriate by the examiner;

34 (b) Any eye doctor who conducts a comprehensive eye  
35 examination of a student given in accordance with the provisions  
36 of this section shall forward a written report of the results of  
37 the examination to the parent or guardian of such student and the  
38 student's primary health care provider. It shall be the  
39 responsibility of the parent or guardian to forward a copy of the  
40 report to school health personnel. The report shall include, but  
41 not be limited to, the following:

42 (i) The date of report;

43 (ii) The name, address and date of birth of the  
44 student;

45 (iii) The name of the student's school;

46 (iv) The type of examination;



47                   (v) A summary of significant findings, including  
48 diagnosis, medication used, duration of action of medication,  
49 treatment, prognosis and whether or not a return visit is  
50 recommended, and if so, when;

51                   (vi) Recommended educational adjustments and  
52 accommodations for the student, if any, which may include:  
53 preferential seating in the classroom, eyeglasses for full-time  
54 use in school, eyeglasses for part-time use in school,  
55 sight-saving eyeglasses or any other recommendations; and

56                   (vii) The name, address and signature of the  
57 examiner; and

58                   (c) Enforcement of the provisions of this subsection  
59 (2) shall be performed by the local school superintendent, or his  
60 designee, the headmaster of the private or parochial school, or  
61 his designee, or the director of the kindergarten program, as  
62 appropriate.

63           ( \* \* \*3) In addition to the comprehensive eye examination  
64 required under subsection (2) of this section, the State  
65 Department of Education is hereby authorized and empowered to  
66 establish a student vision-screening program to make eye-screening  
67 services available to students in Grades K-12 in the public  
68 schools in order to detect vision problems which can lead to  
69 academic problems. Such eye-screening service shall be based on a  
70 process that is screening in nature, and not diagnostic, which is  
71 intended to identify with a reasonably high probability, students



72 with a wide range of eye problems who should seek the services of  
73 an eye care professional for examination, diagnosis and corrective  
74 recommendation. Each school shall be provided with a list of the  
75 students screened, and their results. Statistical summaries of  
76 the screening results shall be provided to each school, and  
77 composite statistics by school system, county or district shall be  
78 provided to the State Department of Education. The State  
79 Department of Education may contract with any legal entity to  
80 administer the student vision-screening program on the school  
81 district level, and such contract shall be let on a competitive  
82 basis. State funding for said program shall only be available  
83 subject to appropriation by the Legislature.

84 ( \* \* \*4) The school board of any local school district  
85 shall cooperate with the State Department of Education and any  
86 entity under contract with the departments to implement the  
87 student eye examination or vision-screening programs established  
88 under this section.

89 \* \* \*

90 (5) Any additional costs for student eye examinations that  
91 are not covered by existing insurance or public assistance  
92 programs shall be managed by the Mississippi Vision Foundation.

93 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
94 and after July 1, 2018.

