

By: Representative Dixon

To: Education;  
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1013

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-21-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 REQUIRE AN ASSISTANT TEACHER TO BE ASSIGNED TO EACH CLASS IN  
3 KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST THROUGH FOURTH GRADES AND TO PROHIBIT  
4 SALARY INCREASES FOR ADMINISTRATORS UNTIL SUCH TIME THAT AN  
5 ASSISTANT TEACHER IS EMPLOYED FOR EACH CLASS IN THOSE GRADES IN AN  
6 ADMINISTRATOR'S SCHOOL DISTRICT; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-21-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
9 amended as follows:

10 37-21-7. (1) This section shall be referred to as the  
11 "Mississippi Elementary Schools Assistant Teacher Program," the  
12 purpose of which shall be to provide an early childhood education  
13 program that assists in the instruction of basic skills. The  
14 State Board of Education is authorized, empowered and directed to  
15 implement a statewide system of assistant teachers in kindergarten  
16 classes and in the first, second \* \* \*, third and fourth grades.  
17 The assistant teacher shall assist pupils in actual instruction  
18 under the strict supervision of a licensed teacher.

19 (2) (a) \* \* \* Each school district shall employ the total  
20 number of assistant teachers funded under subsection (6) of this



21 section. The superintendent of each district shall assign \* \* \*  
22 an assistant \* \* \* teacher to \* \* \* each class in  
23 kindergarten \* \* \* and first \* \* \* through fourth grades in the  
24 district in a manner that will promote the maximum efficiency, as  
25 determined by the superintendent, in the instruction of skills  
26 such as verbal and linguistic skills, logical and mathematical  
27 skills, and social skills.

28 (b) If a licensed teacher to whom an assistant teacher  
29 has been assigned is required to be absent from the classroom, the  
30 assistant teacher may assume responsibility for the classroom in  
31 lieu of a substitute teacher. However, no assistant teacher shall  
32 assume sole responsibility of the classroom for more than three  
33 (3) consecutive school days. Further, in no event shall any  
34 assistant teacher be assigned to serve as a substitute teacher for  
35 any teacher other than the licensed teacher to whom that assistant  
36 teacher has been assigned.

37 (3) Assistant teachers shall have, at a minimum, a high  
38 school diploma or a High School Equivalency Diploma equivalent,  
39 and shall show demonstratable proficiency in reading and writing  
40 skills. The State Department of Education shall develop a testing  
41 procedure for assistant teacher applicants to be used in all  
42 school districts in the state.

43 (4) (a) In order to receive funding, each school district  
44 shall:



45 (i) Submit a plan on the implementation of a  
46 reading improvement program to the State Department of Education;  
47 and

48 (ii) Develop a plan of educational accountability  
49 and assessment of performance, including pretests and posttests,  
50 for reading in Grades 1 through 6.

51 (b) Additionally, each school district shall:

52 (i) Provide annually a mandatory preservice  
53 orientation session, using an existing in-school service day, for  
54 administrators and teachers on the effective use of assistant  
55 teachers as part of a team in the classroom setting and on the  
56 role of assistant teachers, with emphasis on program goals;

57 (ii) Hold periodic workshops for administrators  
58 and teachers on the effective use and supervision of assistant  
59 teachers;

60 (iii) Provide training annually on specific  
61 instructional skills for assistant teachers;

62 (iv) Annually evaluate their program in accordance  
63 with their educational accountability and assessment of  
64 performance plan; and

65 (v) Designate the necessary personnel to supervise  
66 and report on their program.

67 (5) The State Department of Education shall:

68 (a) Develop and assist in the implementation of a  
69 statewide uniform training module, subject to the availability of



70 funds specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature, which  
71 shall be used in all school districts for training administrators,  
72 teachers and assistant teachers. The module shall provide for the  
73 consolidated training of each assistant teacher and teacher to  
74 whom the assistant teacher is assigned, working together as a  
75 team, and shall require further periodic training for  
76 administrators, teachers and assistant teachers regarding the role  
77 of assistant teachers;

78 (b) Annually evaluate the program on the district and  
79 state level. Subject to the availability of funds specifically  
80 appropriated therefor by the Legislature, the department shall  
81 develop: (i) uniform evaluation reports, to be performed by the  
82 principal or assistant principal, to collect data for the annual  
83 overall program evaluation conducted by the department; or (ii) a  
84 program evaluation model that, at a minimum, addresses process  
85 evaluation; and

86 (c) Promulgate rules, regulations and such other  
87 standards deemed necessary to effectuate the purposes of this  
88 section. Noncompliance with the provisions of this section and  
89 any rules, regulations or standards adopted by the department may  
90 result in a violation of compulsory accreditation standards as  
91 established by the State Board of Education and the Commission on  
92 School Accreditation.

93 (6) In addition to other funds allotted under the \* \* \*  
94 Adequate Education Program, each school district shall be allotted



95 sufficient funding for the purpose of employing an assistant \* \* \*  
96 teacher for each class in kindergarten and first through fourth  
97 grades. Until such time that an assistant teacher is employed for  
98 each class in kindergarten and first through fourth grades in a  
99 school district, no administrator in that district may be granted  
100 a salary increase. No assistant teacher shall be paid less than  
101 the amount he or she received in the prior school year. No school  
102 district shall receive any funds under this section for any school  
103 year during which the aggregate amount of the local contribution  
104 to the salaries of assistant teachers by the district shall have  
105 been reduced below such amount for the previous year.

106 \* \* \* The minimum salary for assistant teachers shall be  
107 Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$12,500.00).

108 \* \* \* The assistant teachers shall \* \* \* be assigned  
109 to \* \* \* classes as provided in subsection (2)(a) of this section.

110 (7) \* \* \* Districts meeting the highest levels of  
111 accreditation standards, as defined by the State Board of  
112 Education, shall be exempted from the provisions of subsection (4)  
113 of this section.

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

