

By: Senator(s) Tollison

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2928

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-71, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO CLARIFY REPAYMENT AND CONVERSION TERMS AND THE ADMINISTRATION
3 OF THE MISSISSIPPI DYSLEXIA EDUCATION FORGIVABLE LOAN PROGRAM; AND
4 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-106-71, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 37-106-71. (1) There is established the Mississippi
9 Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program for the purpose of
10 identifying and recruiting qualified university and college
11 students from the state for schooling in education with a focus on
12 dyslexia therapy.

13 (2) The receipt of a forgivable loan under the program shall
14 be solely limited to those students who are enrolled in or who
15 have been accepted for enrollment into a master's degree program
16 of study for dyslexia therapy at any public or private institution
17 of higher learning within the State of Mississippi at the time an
18 application for a forgivable loan is filed with the board.



19 (3) The annual amount of the forgivable loan award shall be
20 equal to the total cost for tuition, materials and fees at the
21 college or university in which the student is enrolled. Awards
22 made to nonresidents of the state shall not include any amount
23 assessed by the college or university for out-of-state tuition.

24 (4) Upon completion of the master's program and licensure
25 requirements, a forgivable loan recipient who has not been
26 previously licensed by the State Department of Education shall
27 render service as a licensed teacher of dyslexia therapy in a
28 public school district in the state or an eligible nonpublic
29 school as defined by Section 37-173-1 and meets the criteria
30 established in Section 37-173-17, not to exceed five (5)
31 recipients rendering services in a nonpublic school at any time.

32 (5) Repayment and conversion terms shall be the same as
33 those outlined in Section 37-106-53, except that service may also
34 be rendered on the basis of two (2) years' part-time service for
35 one (1) year's loan amount.

36 (6) The board shall prepare and submit a report to the
37 Legislature by January 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, outlining
38 in detail the number of participants who have received forgivable
39 loans under the program, the record of service provided by those
40 recipients as they transition out of the degree program into the
41 public school districts of this state, and the projection for
42 expanding the program to include more participants annually as
43 determined by the need for such qualified professionals in the



public school setting. Additionally, the report shall include a summary of allocations and expenditures for the administration of the program and the total amount of funds issued to recipients of forgivable loans from the inception of the program until such time as the report has been prepared and submitted to the Legislature.

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(* * *7) Funding for the establishment and continued operation of the Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program shall be administered by the board through a special fund established * * * for the benefit of the Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program. The board may accept and receive monetary gifts and donations from any source, public or private, which such funds shall be deposited in the special fund for the benefit of the Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program * * *.

(* * *8) No more than twenty (20) students per cohort shall be selected annually to be admitted into the program for receipt of forgivable loans beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year. However, forgivable loans awarded under the program shall be provided only to students who have been accepted into a Dyslexia Therapy Master's Degree Cohort Program approved by the State Department of Education that provides instructional training as required under Chapter 173, Title 37, Mississippi Code of 1972, for dyslexia therapy in preparation of those cohort students for AA licensure by the department.



69 (* * *9) As part of the Mississippi Dyslexia Education
70 Forgivable Loan Program, the State Department of Education is
71 authorized and directed, subject to the availability of funds
72 specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature, to provide
73 financial assistance for the recruitment, placement and employment
74 of qualified licensed dyslexia therapy professionals identified
75 under Section 37-173-15(1)(b), Mississippi Code of 1972, in order
76 to provide dyslexia screening, evaluation and therapy services to
77 the students attending school in the school district. Said
78 funding may be used to purchase curriculum materials and supplies
79 for dyslexia therapy services. Said funding shall be provided to
80 public school districts upon application therefor regardless of
81 the financial need of the school district in an amount not to
82 exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) annually, and subject
83 to specific appropriation therefor by the Legislature. In order
84 to qualify for such funds, the school district shall meet the
85 following criteria:

86 (a) Use licensed dyslexia therapists or individuals
87 participating in an approved training program resulting in State
88 Department of Education licensure to provide dyslexia therapy to
89 students diagnosed with dyslexia;

90 (b) Use daily Orton-Gillingham-based therapy;

91 (c) Have school leadership trained in dyslexia; and



92 (d) Have a current School Program Verification and
93 Assurances form on file with the State Department of Education,
94 Office of Curriculum and Instruction.
95 Procedures and standards for the application for such funds shall
96 be established by regulations developed and issued by the State
97 Board of Education.
98 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
99 and after July 1, 2018.

