

By: Senator(s) Blackwell

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2033

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-16-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REQUIRE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES OR GED APPLICANTS TO PASS AT LEAST
3 60% OF THE CIVICS PORTION OF THE NATURALIZATION TEST USED BY THE
4 IMMIGRATION SERVICES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-16-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 37-16-7. (1) Each district school board shall establish
9 standards for graduation from its schools which shall include as a
10 minimum:

11 (a) Mastery of minimum academic skills as measured by
12 assessments developed and administered by the State Board of
13 Education.

14 (b) Completion of a minimum number of academic credits,
15 and all other applicable requirements prescribed by the district
16 school board.

17 (c) (i) Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the
18 academic standards for social studies shall include a requirement
19 that, in order to graduate from high school or obtain a General



20 Equivalency Diploma (GED), a student must correctly answer at
21 least sixty (60) of the one hundred (100) questions listed on a
22 test that is identical to the civics portion of the Naturalization
23 Test used by the United States Citizenship and Immigration
24 Services.

25 (ii) The local school board may determine the
26 method and manner in which to administer a test that is identical
27 to the civics portion of the Naturalization Test used by the
28 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

29 (iii) A student who does not obtain a passing
30 score on the test that is identical to the civics portion of the
31 Naturalization Test may retake the test until the student obtains
32 a passing score.

33 (iv) A student who has passed a similar test
34 within the previous three (3) years shall not be required to take
35 the test under this section.

36 (v) Provisions of this section shall be subject to
37 the requirements and accommodations of a student's Individualized
38 Education Program.

39 (* * *d) By school, information on high school
40 graduation rates. High schools with graduation rates lower than
41 eighty percent (80%) must submit a detailed plan to the
42 Mississippi Department of Education to restructure the high school
43 experience to improve graduation rates.



44 (2) A student who meets all requirements prescribed in
45 subsection (1) of this section shall be awarded a standard diploma
46 in a form prescribed by the State Board of Education.

47 (3) The State Board of Education may establish student
48 proficiency standards for promotion to grade levels leading to
49 graduation.

50 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
51 and after July 1, 2019.

