

By: Senator(s) Tollison, Parker, Dearing,
Branning, Butler, Frazier, Horhn, Jackson
(11th), Jackson (32nd), Jolly, Jordan,
Norwood, Turner-Ford, Simmons (13th),
McMahan, Witherspoon, Simmons (12th)

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2685
(As Passed the Senate)

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 SCHOOL;
4 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

8 37-3-87. (1) This section shall be known and may be cited
9 as the "Mississippi Vision for Better Learning Program."

10 (2) The State Board of Education shall recommend that a
11 child entering the First Grade whose eye screening indicates a
12 need to have a face-to-face comprehensive eye examination
13 completed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist by January 1 of the
14 child's First Grade year. A principal, director or other person
15 in charge of a public school shall collect from the child's parent
16 or guardian evidence of the child's face-to-face comprehensive eye
17 examination, as provided by regulation of the State Board of
18 Education or a signed request by the parent or guardian of each
19 student opting out of the face-to-face comprehensive eye



20 examination. A face-to-face comprehensive eye examination that
21 was performed prior to a child's initial enrollment in a public
22 school shall be deemed to satisfy the requirement of this section.
23 The State Board of Education shall adopt rules and regulations
24 pursuant to Section 37-3-87 to implement the provisions of this
25 section.

26 (3) The State Department of Education is hereby authorized
27 and empowered to establish a student vision screening program to
28 make eye screening services available to students in Grades K-12
29 in the public schools in order to detect vision problems which can
30 lead to academic problems. Such eye screening service shall be
31 based on a process that is screening in nature, and not
32 diagnostic, which is intended to identify with a reasonably high
33 probability, students with a wide range of eye problems who should
34 seek the services of an eye care professional for examination,
35 diagnosis and corrective recommendation. Each school shall be
36 provided with a list of the students screened, and their results.
37 Statistical summaries of the screening results shall be provided
38 to each school, and composite statistics by school system, county
39 or district shall be provided to the State Department of
40 Education. The State Department of Education may contract with
41 any legal entity to administer the student vision screening
42 program on the school district level, and such contract shall be
43 let on a competitive basis. State funding for said program shall
44 only be available subject to appropriation by the Legislature.



45 (* * *4) The school board of any local school district
46 shall cooperate with the State Department of Education and any
47 entity under contract with the departmentss to implement the
48 student face-to-face comprehensive eye examination or vision
49 screening programs established under this section.

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

