

By: Representatives Deweese, Aguirre, Barnett, Bell (21st), Byrd, Felsher, Ford (54th), Ford (73rd), McCarty, McLean, Powell, Scoggin, Shanks, Steverson, Yancey, Crawford

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 754  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO CREATE NEW SECTION 37-173-16, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
2 1972, TO PROVIDE THE STEPS SCHOOLS MUST TAKE FOR THE EDUCATION AND  
3 CARE OF STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA AND OTHER RELATED DISORDERS; TO  
4 PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL REQUIRE SCHOOL  
5 DISTRICTS TO CONDUCT FOUR HOURS OF AWARENESS TRAINING FOR DYSLEXIA  
6 AND OTHER RELATED DISORDERS TO ALL LICENSED EDUCATORS AND  
7 PARAPROFESSIONALS RESPONSIBLE FOR INSTRUCTION; TO PROVIDE THAT  
8 STANDARD 1 AND STANDARD 2 OF THE INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA  
9 ASSOCIATION'S "KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS OF  
10 READING" 2018 EDITION SHALL BE THE MINIMUM CONTENT USED FOR THE  
11 DYSLEXIA TRAINING; TO AMEND SECTION 37-173-9, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
12 1972, TO DELETE CERTAIN PROVISIONS RELATING TO SCHOOL'S  
13 DETERMINATION OF STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

15 **SECTION 1.** The following shall be codified as Section  
16 37-173-16, Mississippi Code of 1972:

17 37-173-16. (1) Each local school district shall make an  
18 initial determination of whether a student diagnosed with dyslexia  
19 meets the eligibility criteria under the Individuals with  
20 Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to have an Individualized  
21 Education Program developed and to receive services. If a  
22 student's diagnosis of dyslexia does not result in an IDEA  
23 eligibility determination then the district must proceed with



24 their process for determining if the student is eligible for a 504  
25 Plan under the Rehabilitation Act based on the presumption that  
26 proficiency in spelling, reading and writing are essential for the  
27 student to achieve appropriate educational progress. Each local  
28 school district shall develop interventions and strategies to  
29 address the needs of those students diagnosed with dyslexia which  
30 provide the necessary accommodations to enable the student to  
31 achieve appropriate educational progress. The interventions and  
32 strategies developed shall include, but not be limited to, the use  
33 of the 3-Tier Instructional Model and the utilization of  
34 provisions of the IDEA and 504 Plan to address those needs.

35 (2) The State Department of Education shall require public  
36 school districts to conduct four (4) hours of in-service training  
37 in dyslexia and related disorder awareness education every three  
38 (3) years for all licensed educators and paraprofessionals  
39 responsible for instruction. Standard 1 and Standard 2 of the  
40 International Dyslexia Association's "Knowledge and Practice  
41 Standards for Teachers of Reading" 2018 Edition shall be the  
42 minimum content used for the dyslexia training. Additional  
43 content of the trainings shall also include the indicators and  
44 characteristics, screening processes, evidence-based interventions  
45 and accommodations for students with dyslexia and other related  
46 disorders. The training, which may be provided through live  
47 in-person instruction, online course instruction or through a  
48 prerecorded video presentation, shall be delivered by an



49 individual who holds a State Department of Education License No.  
50 203 in Dyslexia Therapy and a national certificate as a Certified  
51 Academic Language Therapist.

52 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-173-9, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
53 amended as follows:

54 37-173-9. (1) (a) The parent or legal guardian is not  
55 required to accept the offer of enrolling in another public school  
56 in lieu of requesting a Mississippi Dyslexia Therapy Scholarship  
57 to a nonpublic school. However, if the parent or legal guardian  
58 chooses the public school option, the student may continue  
59 attending a public school chosen by the parent or legal guardian  
60 until the student completes Grade 12.

61 (b) If the parent or legal guardian chooses a public  
62 school within the district, the school district shall provide  
63 transportation to the public school selected by the parent or  
64 legal guardian. However, if the parent or legal guardian chooses  
65 a public school in another district, the parent or legal guardian  
66 is responsible to provide transportation to the school of choice.

67 \* \* \*

68 \* \* \* These provisions do not prohibit a parent or legal  
69 guardian of a student diagnosed with dyslexia, at any time, from  
70 choosing the option of a Mississippi Dyslexia Therapy Scholarship  
71 which would allow the student to attend another public school or  
72 nonpublic special purpose school.



73 ( \* \* \*2) If the parent or legal guardian chooses the  
74 nonpublic school option and the student is accepted by the  
75 nonpublic school pending the availability of a space for the  
76 student, the parent or legal guardian of the student must notify  
77 the department thirty (30) days before the first scholarship  
78 payment and before entering the nonpublic school in order to be  
79 eligible for the scholarship when a space becomes available for  
80 the student in the nonpublic school.

81 ( \* \* \*3) The parent or legal guardian of a student may  
82 choose, as an alternative, to enroll the student in and transport  
83 the student to a public school in an adjacent school district  
84 which has available space and has a program with dyslexia services  
85 that provide daily dyslexia therapy sessions delivered by a  
86 department licensed dyslexia therapist, and that school district  
87 shall accept the student and report the student for purposes of  
88 the district's funding under the Mississippi Adequate Education  
89 Program.

90 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
91 and after July 1, 2021.

