

By: Representative McKnight

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 457

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-3-82, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO
2 REVISE THE MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES IN
3 SCHOOLS (MCOPS) GRANT PROGRAM TO REQUIRE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS
4 TO ATTEND ANY LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY ACCREDITED BY THE
5 MISSISSIPPI BOARD ON LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER STANDARDS AND
6 TRAINING THAT EMPLOYS ONE OR MORE TRAINERS CERTIFIED TO TEACH
7 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER AND ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE COURSES; AND
8 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-3-82, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
11 amended as follows:

12 37-3-82. (1) There is hereby established the Mississippi
13 Community Oriented Policing Services in Schools (MCOPS) grant
14 program in the State Department of Education to provide funding,
15 pursuant to specific appropriation by the Legislature therefor, to
16 assist law enforcement agencies in providing additional School
17 Resource Officers to engage in community policing in and around
18 primary and secondary schools. The MCOPS program shall authorize
19 the State Department of Education to make grants to increase
20 deployment of law enforcement officers in order (a) to increase or
21 enhance community policing in this state, (b) that trained, sworn



22 enforcement officers assigned to schools play an integral part in
23 the development and/or enhancement of a comprehensive school
24 safety plan, and (c) that the presence of these officers shall
25 provide schools with a direct link to local law enforcement
26 agencies.

27 (2) The MCOPS program shall meet the following requirements
28 and standards:

29 (a) This program shall provide an incentive for law
30 enforcement agencies to build collaborative partnerships with the
31 school community and to use community policing efforts to combat
32 school violence and implement educational programs to improve
33 student and school safety.

34 (b) The additional School Resource Officers must devote
35 at least seventy-five percent (75%) of their time to work in and
36 around primary and secondary schools, in addition to the time that
37 School Resource Officers are devoting in the absence of the MCOPS
38 in Schools grant.

39 (c) Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the MCOPS
40 in Schools program shall provide a minimum state contribution of
41 up to Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) per officer position over
42 the one-year grant period, to be matched from local funds on a
43 50/50 matching basis. Officers paid with MCOPS funds may be
44 employed by the local law enforcement agency or by the local
45 school district. MCOPS funds may be used to pay for entry-level
46 salaries and benefits of newly trained additional School Resource



47 Officers and may be used to pay the salaries and benefits of
48 School Resource Officers employed prior to July 1, 2013. All
49 jurisdictions that apply must demonstrate that they have primary
50 law enforcement authority over the school(s) identified in their
51 application and demonstrate their inability to implement this
52 project without state assistance. Schools or law enforcement
53 agencies may not reduce its overall federal, state, locally funded
54 level of sworn officers (including other School Resource Officers
55 or other sworn officers assigned to the schools) as a result of
56 applying for or receiving MCOPS in Schools grant funding. MCOPS
57 in Schools funding may be used to rehire sworn officers previously
58 employed who have been laid off for financial reasons unrelated to
59 the availability of the MCOPS in Schools grant, but must obtain
60 prior written approval from the State Department of Education.
61 MCOPS in Schools funding may be used to train school resource
62 officers. In order to be eligible for such program, each local
63 school board desiring to participate shall apply to the State
64 Department of Education by May 31 before the beginning of the
65 applicable fiscal year on forms provided by the department. The
66 State Department of Education shall determine by July 1 of each
67 succeeding year which local school districts have submitted
68 approved applications for School Resource Officer funding.

69 (d) School Resource Officers (SROs) may serve in a
70 variety of roles, including, but not limited to, that of a law
71 enforcement officer/safety specialist, law-related educator, and



72 problem-solver/community liaison. These officers may teach
73 programs such as crime prevention, substance abuse prevention, and
74 gang resistance as well as monitor and assist troubled students
75 through mentoring programs. The School Resource Officer(s) may
76 also identify physical changes in the environment that may reduce
77 crime in and around the schools, as well as assist in developing
78 school policies which address criminal activity and school safety.
79 The application must also include a Memorandum of Understanding
80 (MOU), signed by the law enforcement executive and the appropriate
81 school official(s), to document the roles and responsibilities to
82 be undertaken by the law enforcement agency and the educational
83 school partner(s) through this collaborative effort. The
84 application must also include a Narrative Addendum to document
85 that the School Resource Officer(s) will be assigned to work in
86 and around primary or secondary schools and provide supporting
87 documentation in the following areas: problem identification and
88 justification, community policing strategies to be used by the
89 officers, quality and level of commitment to the effort, and the
90 link to community policing.

91 (e) All agencies receiving awards through the MCOPS in
92 Schools program are required to send the School Resource Officer
93 position(s) funded by this grant, to * * * any law enforcement
94 academy accredited by the Mississippi Board on Law Enforcement
95 Officer Standards and Training that employs one or more trainers
96 certified to teach school resource officer and active shooter



97 response courses, with the cost to be defrayed from the MCOPS
98 program. The MCOPS Office of the State Department of Education
99 will reimburse grantees for training, per diem, travel, and
100 lodging costs for attendance of required participants up to a
101 maximum of One Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$1,200.00) per person
102 attending. Applicants receiving an MCOPS in Schools grant, will
103 receive additional training information following notification of
104 the grant award. The MCOPS in Schools training requirement must
105 be completed prior to the end of twelve-month grant funding for
106 officer positions.

107 (3) The State Department of Education shall promulgate rules
108 and regulations prescribing procedures for the application,
109 expenditure requirements and the administration of the Mississippi
110 Community Oriented Policing Services in Schools (MCOPS) program
111 established in this section, and shall make a report on the
112 implementation of the MCOPS program with any recommendations to
113 the 2020 Regular Session of the Legislature.

114 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
115 and after July 1, 2022.

