

By: Representatives McKnight, Stamps,  
Karriem

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 1240

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-3-82, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
2 AUTHORIZE ANY CERTIFIED AND ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS'  
3 TRAINING ACADEMY, LOCATED WITHIN THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI AND  
4 APPROVED BY THE BOARD ON LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER STANDARDS AND  
5 TRAINING, TO PROVIDE TRAINING THROUGH THE ADVANCED LAW ENFORCEMENT  
6 RAPID RESPONSE TRAINING (ALERT) PROGRAM; TO BRING FORWARD SECTION  
7 37-7-321, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, FOR THE PURPOSE OF POSSIBLE  
8 AMENDMENT; AND 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 \* \* \* participate in training  
94 through the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training  
95 (ALERRT) Program at \* \* \* any certified and accredited law  
96 enforcement officers' training academy located within the State of



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

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

115 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-7-321, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
116 brought forward as follows:

117 37-7-321. (1) The school board of any school district  
118 within the State of Mississippi, in its discretion, may employ one  
119 or more persons as security personnel and may designate such  
120 persons as peace officers in or on any property operated for  
121 school purposes by such board upon their taking such oath and



122 making such bond as required of a constable of the county in which  
123 the school district is situated.

124 (2) Any person employed by a school board as a security  
125 guard or school resource officer or in any other position that has  
126 the powers of a peace officer must receive a minimum level of  
127 basic law enforcement training, as jointly determined and  
128 prescribed by the Board on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and  
129 Training and the State Board of Education, within two (2) years of  
130 the person's initial employment in such position. Upon the  
131 failure of any person employed in such position to receive the  
132 required training within the designated time, the person may not  
133 exercise the powers of a peace officer in or on the property of  
134 the school district.

135 (3) The school board is authorized and empowered, in its  
136 discretion, and subject to the approval of the Federal  
137 Communications Commission, to install and operate a noncommercial  
138 radio broadcasting and transmission station for educational and  
139 vocational educational purposes.

140 (4) If a law enforcement officer is duly appointed to be a  
141 peace officer by a school district under this section, the local  
142 school board may enter into an interlocal agreement with other law  
143 enforcement entities for the provision of equipment or traffic  
144 control duties, however, the duty to enforce traffic regulations  
145 and to enforce the laws of the state or municipality off of school  
146 property lies with the local police or sheriff's department which



147 cannot withhold its services solely because of the lack of such an  
148 agreement.

149           **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
150 and after July 1, 2022.

