

By: Senator(s) DeBar, Boyd, England, Jackson To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2361

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE MISSISSIPPI MODIFIED SCHOOL CALENDAR
 2 GRANT PROGRAM TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
 3 FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCENTIVIZING PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO
 4 MAINTAIN OR CONSIDER ADOPTING A MODIFIED SCHOOL CALENDAR BY
 5 OFFSETTING COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH ADOPTING A MODIFIED SCHOOL
 6 CALENDAR THROUGH A TIME-LIMITED GRANT; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT
 7 TO DEVELOP REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES TO GOVERN THE ADMINISTRATION
 8 OF THE GRANT PROGRAM, INCLUDING APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS; TO
 9 PROVIDE FOR THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA; TO PROVIDE THAT GRANTS
 10 AWARDED SHALL BE USED FOR EXPENSES INCURRED AS A RESULT OF THE
 11 ADOPTION OF A MODIFIED SCHOOL CALENDAR; TO PROVIDE THAT SCHOOL
 12 DISTRICTS SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR A MAXIMUM AWARD OF \$200,000.00 PER
 13 YEAR FOR A MAXIMUM OF (3) YEARS; TO CREATE A SPECIAL FUND IN THE
 14 STATE TREASURY, TO BE KNOWN AS THE "MISSISSIPPI MODIFIED SCHOOL
 15 CALENDAR GRANT FUND; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE A
 16 COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON THE USE OF FUNDS DISTRIBUTED UNDER THIS
 17 GRANT PROGRAM TO THE GOVERNOR, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, SPEAKER OF THE
 18 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AND CHAIRS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE
 19 APPROPRIATIONS AND EDUCATION COMMITTEES BY OCTOBER 1, 2023, AND
 20 OCTOBER 1 OF EACH YEAR THEREAFTER; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

22 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the
 23 "Mississippi Modified School Calendar Grant Program."

24 **SECTION 2.** The Mississippi Legislature finds the following:

25 (a) Whereas, a modified school calendar apportioning
 26 required instructional days throughout the year can increase



27 student achievement and engagement and provide staff with a more
28 flexible schedule.

29 (b) Therefore, it is the intent of the Mississippi
30 Legislature to incentivize public school districts to maintain or
31 consider adopting a modified school calendar by offsetting costs
32 associated with adopting a modified school calendar through a
33 time-limited grant.

34 **SECTION 3.** For purposes of this act, the following words
35 shall have the meanings ascribed herein unless the context
36 requires otherwise:

37 (a) "Grant program" means the Mississippi Modified
38 School Calendar Grant Program established in this act.

39 (b) "Department" means the Mississippi Department of
40 Education.

41 (c) "Modified school calendar" means a non-traditional
42 school calendar in which the length of summer break is shortened,
43 there are breaks dispersed throughout the school year, and
44 required instructional days are evenly distributed across the
45 calendar year.

46 (d) "School district" means all public school
47 districts.

48 **SECTION 4.** (1) There is established the Mississippi
49 Modified School Calendar Grant Program which shall be administered
50 by the department for the purpose of offsetting initial costs



51 incurred by school districts which have implemented or intend to
52 implement a modified school calendar.

53 (2) Subject to the provisions of this act and any other
54 applicable state law and regulation, school districts receiving a
55 grant shall have the authority to use the funds provided in this
56 grant program in a way that best facilitates their plan to
57 transition to and maintain a modified school calendar and maximize
58 student achievement and engagement.

59 **SECTION 5.** (1) The department shall:

60 (a) Inform all school districts about the grant
61 program;

62 (b) Develop regulations and procedures to govern the
63 administration of the grant program, including application
64 requirements, within two (2) months after enactment; and

65 (c) Subject to appropriation, award school districts
66 meeting the requirements of the program a grant for expenses
67 related to the adoption or maintenance of a modified school
68 calendar beginning in the 2023-2024 academic year. Initial grant
69 awards shall be made by July 1, 2023, and July 1 of each year
70 thereafter.

71 (2) The department shall administer this program with
72 existing personnel and resources and shall not contract for
73 external support.

74 (3) An application for an award from the grant program shall
75 include:



76 (a) The rationale for adopting a modified school
77 calendar, including relevant short- and long-term goals of the
78 school district which a modified calendar may help achieve;

79 (b) Evidence of community support and engagement to
80 move to a modified school calendar;

81 (c) A detailed budget of operating expenses expected to
82 be incurred as a result of adopting a modified calendar; and

83 (d) A detailed calendar, including plans for any
84 intercession activities.

85 (4) Grants awarded shall be used for expenses incurred as a
86 result of the adoption of a modified school calendar, including,
87 but not limited to:

88 (a) Transportation;

89 (b) Certified and noncertified staffing during
90 intercessions;

91 (c) Remediation and enrichment programs during
92 intercession; and

93 (d) Utilities.

94 **SECTION 6.** (1) School districts shall be eligible for a
95 maximum award of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00) per
96 year for a maximum of three (3) years.

97 (2) Eligible school districts shall include those which
98 implement a modified school calendar by the beginning of the
99 2023-2024 academic year. Any school district which implemented a



100 modified school calendar in the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 or 2022-2023
101 academic years shall also be eligible.

102 (3) The amount awarded each year shall be based on the
103 actual budget and plan submitted by the school district, the
104 number of students in the school district, and other factors which
105 may increase the cost of delivery of services, including the rural
106 nature of the school district.

107 (4) The amount of the award shall not exceed the actual
108 budget submitted by the school district related to modified school
109 calendar costs.

110 (5) Grants received by school districts under this chapter
111 shall not be used to purchase land, construct new facilities or to
112 finance or satisfy any existing debt.

113 **SECTION 7.** There is created a special fund in the State
114 Treasury, to be known as the "Mississippi Modified School Calendar
115 Grant Fund," from which the grants authorized by this act shall be
116 disbursed by the department. The fund shall be maintained by the
117 State Treasurer as a separate and special fund, separate and apart
118 from the General Fund of the state. Unexpended amounts remaining
119 in the fund at the end of a fiscal year shall remain in the fund
120 and shall not lapse into the State General Fund. Any interest
121 earned or investment earnings or interest earned on amounts in the
122 fund shall be deposited to the credit of the fund.

123 **SECTION 8.** The department shall provide a comprehensive
124 report on the use of funds distributed under this grant program



125 and the effectiveness of modified calendar school districts to the
126 Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of
127 Representatives, and Chairs of the Senate and House Appropriations
128 and Education Committees by October 1, 2023, and October 1 of each
129 year thereafter.

130 **SECTION 9.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
131 and after its passage.

