

By: Senator(s) McLendon, Blackwell, Parker

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2351

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-16-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO AUTHORIZE STUDENTS HAVING A DISABILITY AS DEFINED BY THE
3 FEDERAL INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA) TO
4 OBTAIN A SPECIAL MISSISSIPPI OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA; TO DELETE
5 CERTAIN PROHIBITIONS RELATED THERETO; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-16-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 37-16-11. (1) A student who has been properly classified,
10 in accordance with rules established by the State Board of
11 Education shall, upon meeting all applicable requirements
12 prescribed by the district school board, be awarded a special
13 diploma in a form prescribed by the state board; however, such
14 special graduation requirements prescribed by the district school
15 board shall include minimum graduation requirements as prescribed
16 by the state board. Any such student who meets all special
17 requirements of the district school board for his exceptionality,
18 but is unable to meet the appropriate special state minimum
19 requirements, shall be awarded a special certificate of completion



20 in a form prescribed by the state board. Nothing provided in this
21 section, however, shall be construed to limit or restrict the
22 right of an exceptional student solely to a special diploma. Any
23 such student shall, upon proper request, be afforded the
24 opportunity to fully meet all requirements of Section 37-16-7
25 through the standard procedures established therein and thereby
26 qualify for a standard diploma upon graduation.

27 (2) The State Board of Education shall develop and issue
28 criteria for a Mississippi Occupational Diploma for students
29 having a disability as defined by the federal Individuals with
30 Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Beginning with the 2002-2003
31 school year, any such student, upon proper request, shall be
32 afforded the opportunity to fully meet such requirements and
33 qualify for an occupational diploma upon graduation.

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35 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
36 and after July 1, 2024.

