

By: Representative Scott

To: Education;
Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 307

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE
2 BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING TO
3 ESTABLISH A PROGRAM KNOWN AS THE "DREAM MAKERS PROGRAM" FOR PUBLIC
4 SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GRADES 7 AND 8; TO PROVIDE THAT THE PURPOSE OF
5 THE PROGRAM WILL BE TO STIMULATE INTEREST IN SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS
6 AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS; TO REQUIRE THE PROGRAM TO BE
7 CONDUCTED AS AN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE PROGRAM TO BE
8 A TWO-YEAR COURSE OF STUDY; TO PRESCRIBE THE ELIGIBILITY
9 REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN AND THE COMPONENTS TO BE
10 INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM; TO PRESCRIBE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR
11 PARTICIPANTS; TO REQUIRE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO DESIGNATE A
12 PROGRAM ADVISOR RESPONSIBLE FOR PERFORMING THE NECESSARY SERVICES
13 TO FACILITATE ACTIVITIES OF THE PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE EACH SCHOOL
14 DISTRICT TO DESIGNATE A REGIONAL COORDINATOR TO ASSIST THE ADVISOR
15 IN MEETING GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES; TO REQUIRE THE
16 UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI MEDICAL CENTER TO DESIGNATE A STAFF
17 MEMBER TO ACT AS PROJECT COORDINATOR BETWEEN THE MEDICAL CENTER
18 AND THE ADVISOR; TO ESTABLISH THE DREAM MAKERS TRUST FUND IN THE
19 STATE TREASURY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND
20 SCHOOLS FOR START-UP COSTS AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPLEMENTING
21 AND OPERATING THE PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

22 WHEREAS, the Mississippi Legislature emphasizes the
23 importance of fostering high standards for educating the state's
24 students enrolled in and attending public schools by increasing
25 efforts to prepare these students for the pursuit of continued
26 educational success and the professional careers that are obtained
27 as a result; and



28 WHEREAS, with a nationally growing demand for health care
29 professionals, the Mississippi Legislature finds it incumbent upon
30 itself to take proper measures to reduce shortages in the health
31 care profession, as these shortages directly impact the medical
32 workforce and the availability of health care throughout our
33 state; and

34 WHEREAS, with education being the fundamental building block
35 for the grooming and development of the impressionable minds of
36 our state's educable children for the educational and career paths
37 upon which they will embark, there exists a great need for the
38 implementation of a more rigorously enhanced scientific,
39 mathematic and language arts curriculum in the public school
40 setting to facilitate an increased educational capacity in health
41 care programs; and

42 WHEREAS, to accomplish the pertinent goal of producing a
43 capable and knowledgeable health care workforce, a collaborative
44 effort must be undertaken by the state's medical university and
45 research institution, the State Department of Education and local
46 school districts to afford students every reasonable opportunity
47 to explore a career in the field of health care; and

48 WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Mississippi Legislature to
49 promote the educational accountability of public schools and the
50 students educated therein through the implementation of
51 informational, analytical and research-based programs of



instruction to heighten public school students' awareness and
interests in health care professions: NOW, THEREFORE,

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

SECTION 1. (1) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year,
the State Department of Education, in conjunction with the Board
of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning acting for
and on behalf of the University of Mississippi Medical Center
(UMMC), shall establish and implement a program known as the
"Dream Makers Program" for public school students in Grades 7 and
8, the purpose of which will be to stimulate interest in science
and mathematics and the health care professions, especially among
underserved and underrepresented populations in Mississippi, and
to increase awareness of the urgent need for health care workers
in our state.

(2) The program established under subsection (1) of this
section for the introduction of students to a potential career in
the health care professions must be conducted as an after-school
program, during which time students must be provided guidance
about health-related careers and how science and mathematics
pertain to these areas from a licensed school district employee
with adequate certification in science or mathematics, or both.
The State Department of Education and the Board of Trustees of
State Institutions of Higher Learning shall determine the
frequency that the program will meet, as well as the number of



meetings required to be facilitated by a UMMC medical student,
resident or health care professional.

(3) The program must be a two-year course of study for those
students meeting the eligibility requirements of this subsection.
A student may not be admitted to the program before the end of the
first academic grading period for the student's school district.
Eligibility for participation is limited to students who:

(a) Maintain a cumulative 2.5 grade point average on a
4.0 scale;

(b) Are recommended by the their science or mathematics
teachers, or both;

(c) Have a consistent record of attendance;

(d) Display positive attitudes, character and
citizenship; and

(e) Express a desire to expand their knowledge of
health care and medicine.

However, before any student is accepted for participation
under the criteria of this subsection, that student's parent,
legal guardian or custodian must submit written authorization
agreeing to the student's participation in the program.

(4) Each program must include, but not be limited to, the
following components:

(a) Dissection of various specimens;

(b) Blood pressure and temperature reading instruction;

(c) A health care professionals panel;



(d) Instructional interaction with UMMC medical students;

(e) Activities planned by individual program advisors; and

(f) An end-of-the-year awards banquet.

A program advisor, with the consent of the State Department of Education, may modify the program under his or her authority to expand the instructional components offered to the students served by the program.

(5) Students participating in the program are expected to attend all meetings of the program; a student may not exceed one (1) excused absence per year in order to remain eligible for participation in the end-of-the-year awards banquet. Any student missing in excess of one (1) absence per year may elect, but is not required, to continue participating in the program.

(6) Nothing in this section may be construed to conflict with or repeal the provisions of law relating to after-school mentoring programs under Section 37-3-85.

SECTION 2. (1) Each local school district shall designate a program advisor, who shall perform the necessary services to facilitate the execution of the program goals, objectives and activities by:

(a) Providing health care career exposure;



(b) Identifying, recruiting, selecting, mentoring and advising a group of seventh and eighth graders from the school district to participate in the Dream Makers Program;

(c) Providing the minimum number of health care careers workshops per year, as designated by the State Department of Education and Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, to students in the Dream Makers Program;

(d) Providing Dream Makers student leadership workshops through community entities;

(e) Providing an evening presentation to members of the Dream Makers Program and their families on the costs associated with higher education and available sources of financial aid;

(f) Addressing unique issues relating to the cultural beliefs of the students from the local school district region about science and health care professions; and

(g) Educating students, families and communities about health care professions and UMMC.

(2) The program advisor shall develop session topics, which must include areas of health care that are available and relevant to the community.

(3) The local school district shall designate a regional coordinator for the district, who will assist the program advisor in securing local health professionals for student workshops. The regional coordinator also will assist in planning the schedule and



activities with the program advisor and local health care professionals.

(4) UMMC shall designate a staff member to act as project coordinator between UMMC and the program advisor. Throughout the period of the program, copies of all correspondence, work products, specifications, estimates and other materials prepared by the advisor must be directed to the project coordinator and also to any other UMMC personnel designated by the project coordinator. Direct contact or communication by the program advisor with other UMMC offices or any other state or governmental entity concerning the program may be made only with the prior knowledge and approval of the project coordinator and the State Department of Education.

(5) (a) The program advisor shall file with the project coordinator a monthly progress report and schedule for the program. One (1) copy must be forwarded to UMMC in sufficient time to be received no later than the tenth day of the month immediately following the end of the month covered by the report.

(b) Each report must include a summary of accomplishments during the past month, a projection of work to be accomplished during the month the report is filed, and a long-range projection of work to be accomplished during the next three (3) months. Any information required from UMMC and the dates that information is necessary in order to maintain the schedule must be specifically identified in these reports.



173 (c) A monthly report and schedule must be submitted
174 until the program is completed.

175 (d) The schedule must show clearly the reason for any
176 delay, such as program clarification or revision or delay in
177 receipt of UMMC information or approvals, and must include the
178 dates that each delay started and ended.

179 (6) If requested by the project coordinator, the program
180 advisor shall meet, as soon as possible, with the project
181 coordinator and other UMMC and State Department of Education staff
182 to discuss final details relative to commencement of and
183 performance of this program in the local school district.

184 **SECTION 3.** (1) There is established in the State Treasury a
185 fund to be known as the "Dream Makers Trust Fund." The purpose of
186 the fund is to provide financial support to local school districts
187 and schools for start-up costs and costs associated with
188 implementing and operating the Dream Makers Program. The fund may
189 consist of monies obtained from grants from the federal
190 government, funds made available by the Legislature, and grants,
191 gifts, devises and donations from any public or private source.
192 The State Board of Education and the Board of Trustees of State
193 Institutions of Higher Learning shall administer the fund and may
194 apply for any grants from the federal government or private
195 sources.

196 (2) The State Board of Education and the Board of Trustees
197 of State Institutions of Higher Learning jointly shall adopt rules



198 and regulations necessary for the implementation of this section.
199 If sufficient funds are available for this purpose, monies from
200 the Dream Makers Trust Fund must be distributed to qualifying
201 school districts and schools in accordance with the procedures
202 established by the State Board of Education and the Board of
203 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning.

204 **SECTION 4.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
205 and after July 1, 2025.

