

By: Representative Scott

To: Education

## HOUSE BILL NO. 312

1 AN ACT TO BE KNOWN AS "VISION 2030: AN EDUCATION BLUEPRINT  
2 FOR TWO THOUSAND THIRTY"; TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
3 TO ADOPT A RULE THAT INCLUDES GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES,  
4 INDICATORS AND BENCHMARKS; TO ESTABLISH GOALS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION  
5 IN THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI; TO CREATE AN EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP TO  
6 ACHIEVE STATE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

8 **SECTION 1.** (1) This act shall be known and may be cited as  
9 "Vision 2030: An Education Blueprint for Two Thousand Thirty."

10 (2) The Legislature finds that:

11 (a) Because the State of Mississippi faces obstacles  
12 such as lower family income levels and lower parent education  
13 levels, the state must do even more to compete with other states  
14 to increase student achievement and ensure that high school  
15 graduates are prepared fully for postsecondary education or  
16 gainful employment;

17 (b) A clear plan that includes goals, objectives,  
18 strategies, indicators and benchmarks is needed in order to keep  
19 the state's education system on track for success; and



(c) In order to eliminate any confusion, these goals, objectives, strategies, indicators and benchmarks for public education should be set forth in one (1) rule that is promulgated by the State Board of Education pursuant to this section and which meets the requirements of this section.

(3) The purpose of this act is to require that this clear plan be established as part of Vision 2030: An Education Blueprint for Two Thousand Thirty.

**SECTION 2.** The following words and phrases have the meanings ascribed in this section unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

(a) "Goals" means those long-term public purposes which are the desired and expected end result and may include only those items listed in Section 3.

(b) "Objectives" means the ends to be accomplished or attained within a specified period of time for the purpose of meeting the established goals.

(c) "Strategies" means specific activities carried out by the public education system which are directed toward accomplishing specific objectives.

**SECTION 3.** (1) The State Board of Education shall promulgate a rule that includes the following:

(a) The goals set forth in this act and no other goals;



(b) At least those objectives set forth in this section and specified periods of time for achieving those objectives and any other objectives that may be included in the rule;

(c) Strategies for achieving the specific objectives;

(d) Indicators for measuring progress toward the goals and objectives established in this section; and

(e) Benchmarks for determining when the goals and objectives have been achieved.

(2) The rule must include the following list of exclusive goals for the public education system in Mississippi:

(a) Academic achievement according to national and international measures will exceed national and international averages. These national and international measures should include scores on assessments such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the ACT and the SAT;

(b) The public education system will prepare fully all students for postsecondary education or gainful employment;

(c) All working-age adults will be functionally literate;

(d) The public education system will maintain and promote the health and safety of all students and will develop and promote responsibility, citizenship and strong character in all students; and

(e) The public education system will provide equitable education opportunities to all students.



(3) The rule also must include at least the following policy-oriented objectives:

(a) Rigorous twenty-first century curriculum and engaging instruction for all students. All students in Mississippi public schools should have access to and benefit from a rigorous twenty-first century curriculum that develops proficiency in core subjects, twenty-first century content, learning skills and technology tools. These students also should have that curriculum delivered through engaging, research-based instructional strategies that develop deep understanding and the ability to apply content to real-world situations.

(b) A twenty-first century accountability and accreditation system. The prekindergarten through Grade 12 education system should have a public accrediting system that: holds local school districts accountable for the student outcomes that the state values; and provides the public with understandable accountability data for judging the quality of local schools. The outcomes on which the system is based should be rigorous and should align with national and international standards such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the ACT and the SAT. The broad standards established for these outcomes should include a focus on mastery of basic skills by all students, closing the achievement gap among student subgroups, and high levels of proficiency in a wide range of desired twenty-first century measures and processes. The system for determining school



93 and district accreditation should include school and district  
94 self-analysis and generate appropriate research-based strategies  
95 for improvement. It also should allow opportunities to create  
96 innovative approaches to instructional delivery and design. The  
97 system will incorporate processes for encouraging innovation,  
98 including financial support for successful initiatives and  
99 recognition of those practices that can be brought to a district  
100 or statewide scale. Although the primary goal of the  
101 accreditation system is to drive school improvement, it also will  
102 serve as a basis for rewards, sanctions and interventions.

103 (c) A statewide balanced assessment process that  
104 includes an individualized student data management system. State,  
105 district, school and classroom decisionmaking should be grounded  
106 in twenty-first century balanced assessment processes that reflect  
107 national and international rigorous performance standards and  
108 examine student proficiency in twenty-first century content,  
109 skills and technology tools. A balanced assessment system  
110 includes statewide summative assessments, local benchmark  
111 assessments and classroom assessments for learning. Mississippi's  
112 assessment system also should include international benchmarking  
113 processes that allow comparison of Mississippi's performance to  
114 international performance. To effectively use assessment data,  
115 principals and teachers should be provided ready access to results  
116 through student digital data profiles that individually track  
117 student performance and provide educators with diagnostic



information necessary to make appropriate instructional decisions on behalf of students.

(d) A personnel allocation, licensure and funding process that aligns with the needs of twenty-first century school systems and is supported by a quality coordinated professional development delivery system. Increased accountability demands, as well as the focus on twenty-first century learning, require a reexamination of traditional approaches to personnel allocation, licensure and funding. Creating schools of the twenty-first century requires new staffing roles and staffing patterns. It also requires ongoing professional development activities focused on enhancing student achievement and achieving specific goals of the school and district strategic plans. Thus, schools should have the ability to access, organize and deliver high quality embedded professional development that provides staff with in-depth sustained and supported learning. Effective school improvement should be supported by a flexible school calendar that allows opportunity for staff to collectively learn, plan and implement curricular and instructional improvements on behalf of the students they serve.

(e) School environments that promote safe, healthy and responsible behavior and provide an integrated system of student support services. Each school should create an environment focused on student learning and one where students know they are valued, respected and safe. Furthermore, the school should



143 incorporate programs and processes that instill healthy, safe and  
144 responsible behaviors and prepare students for interactions with  
145 individuals of diverse racial, ethnic and social backgrounds.  
146 School and district processes should include a focus on developing  
147 ethical and responsible character, personal dispositions that  
148 promote personal wellness through planned daily physical activity  
149 and healthy eating habits consistent with high nutritional  
150 guidelines and multicultural experiences that develop an  
151 appreciation of and respect for diversity. The school and school  
152 district also should address the needs of students who arrive at  
153 school with social, emotional and physical needs that require  
154 specialized and diverse services. School districts should have  
155 the capability to access, manage and deliver services to these  
156 students in an organized integrated system that taps the resources  
157 of both the school and the broader community.

158 (f) A leadership recruitment, development and support  
159 continuum. Mississippi should have an aligned leadership  
160 professional development continuum that attracts, develops and  
161 supports educational leadership at the classroom, school and  
162 district level. This leadership development continuum should  
163 focus on creating: (i) learning-centered schools and school  
164 systems; (ii) collaborative processes for staff learning and  
165 continuous improvement; and (iii) accountability measures for  
166 student achievement.



167 (g) Equitable access to twenty-first century technology  
168 and education resources and school facilities conducive to  
169 twenty-first century teaching and learning. A quality educational  
170 system of the twenty-first century should have access to  
171 technology tools and processes that enhance effective and  
172 efficient operation. Administrators should have the digital  
173 resources to monitor student performance, manage a variety of data  
174 and communicate effectively. In the classroom, every teacher in  
175 every school should be provided with the instructional resources  
176 and educational technology necessary to deliver the Mississippi  
177 content standard and objectives. Schools of the twenty-first  
178 century require facilities that accommodate changing technologies,  
179 twenty-first century instructional processes and twenty-first  
180 century staffing needs and patterns. These school facilities  
181 should mirror the best in green construction and must be  
182 environmentally and educationally responsive to the communities in  
183 which they are located.

184 (h) Aligned public school with postsecondary and  
185 workplace readiness programs and standards. An educational system  
186 in the twenty-first century should be seen as a continuum from the  
187 public school (prekindergarten through Grade 12 program) through  
188 postsecondary education. In order to be successful in a global  
189 competitive marketplace, learning should be an ongoing, lifelong  
190 experience. Thus, the public schools and the state institutions  
191 of higher learning in Mississippi should create a system of common





standards, expectations and accountability to enhance opportunities for success and assure a seamless educational process for Mississippi students.

(i) A universal prekindergarten system. Every eligible student should be enrolled in a high quality, universal prekindergarten system. The system should promote oral language and preliteracy skills in order to reduce the deficit of these foundational skills through proactive, early intervention. Local school districts should create the supports and provide the resources to assure a quality prekindergarten foundation is available to all eligible students.

(4) In addition to the policy-oriented objectives set forth in subsection (3) of this section, the rule established pursuant to this section also must include at least the following performance oriented objectives:

(a) All children entering the first grade will be ready for the first grade;

(b) The performance of students falling in the lowest quartile on national and international measures of student performance will improve by fifty percent (50%);

(c) Ninety percent (90%) of ninth graders will graduate from high school;

(d) By the year 2027, the ten (10) counties with the lowest college-attendance rates as of July 1, 2025, will increase their college-attendance rate to the 2027 state average and the



college-attendance rate of the state will equal the college-attendance rate of the member states of the Southern Regional Education Board; and

(e) By the year 2030, the ten (10) counties with the lowest college-attendance rates as of July 1, 2025, will increase their college-attendance rate to the 2030 college-attendance rate of the member states of the Southern Regional Education Board, and the college-attendance rate of the state will exceed the college-attendance rate of the member states of the Southern Regional Education Board by five (5) percentage points.

**SECTION 4.** (1) It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this section to establish state goals for public higher education which benefit the citizens of the State of Mississippi.

(2) It is further the intent of the Legislature that this section be read and implemented in conjunction with the accountability system established in Section 5 of this act.

(3) The Legislature finds that postsecondary education is vital to the future of Mississippi. For the state to realize its considerable potential in the twenty-first century, it must have a system for the delivery of postsecondary education which is competitive in the changing national and global environment, is affordable for the state and its citizenry and has the capacity to deliver the programs and services necessary to meet regional and statewide needs.



241       The Legislature further finds that it is vitally important  
242       for young people entering the workforce to have the education and  
243       skills to succeed in today's high-technology, knowledge-based  
244       economy. It is equally important for working-age adults who are  
245       the majority of the current and potential workforce also to  
246       possess the requisite education and skills to compete successfully  
247       in the workplace and to have the opportunity to continue learning  
248       throughout their lives. The future of the state rests not only on  
249       how well its youth are educated, but also on how well it educates  
250       its entire population of any age.

251       The Legislature further finds that providing access to a  
252       high-quality and affordable postsecondary education is a state  
253       responsibility and that states are not maximizing their investment  
254       in higher education. The Legislature recognizes the efforts of  
255       the National Conference of State Legislatures' Blue Ribbon  
256       Commission on Higher Education in producing a report to assist the  
257       states in higher education policymaking. The Legislature  
258       acknowledges that according to the commission report,  
259       "Transforming Higher Education: National Imperative -- State  
260       Responsibility," the United States is losing its competitive  
261       advantage in a new, high-tech, highly mobile global economy and  
262       that this lack of competitiveness is a matter of the highest  
263       urgency for federal and state policymakers. The report goes on to  
264       add that "higher education is both the problem and the solution"  
265       because the nation has failed to focus on how higher education



energizes American competitiveness and revitalizes the states.  
Pursuant to these findings, the commission made some specific  
recommendations addressed to the states, which include the  
following:

- (a) Define clear state goals;
- (b) Identify your state's strengths and weaknesses;
- (c) Know your state demographic trends for the next ten  
(10) to thirty (30) years;
- (d) Identify a place or structure to sustain the public  
policy agenda;
- (e) Hold institutions accountable for their  
performance;
- (f) Rethink funding formulas and student aid;
- (g) Make a commitment to access, success and  
innovation;
- (h) Encourage partnerships;
- (i) Give special attention to adult learners; and
- (j) Focus on productivity.

The Legislature declares that all of these recommendations  
are useful in providing policy guidance and have been given  
careful consideration in the development of this section.

**SECTION 5.** In recognition of its importance to the citizens  
of Mississippi, the Legislature establishes the following goals  
for public higher education in the state:



290 (a) The ultimate goal of public education is to enhance  
291 the quality of life for citizens of the State of Mississippi.

292 (b) The overall focus of public education is on  
293 developing and maintaining a process of lifelong learning which is  
294 as seamless as possible at all levels, encourages citizens of all  
295 ages to increase their knowledge and skills and provides ample  
296 opportunities for them to participate in public higher education.

297 (c) Higher education collaborates with public education  
298 and other providers to offer education opportunities:

299 (i) To individuals of all ages and socioeconomic  
300 backgrounds in all areas of the state; and

301 (ii) To overcome financial barriers to  
302 participation for both traditional and nontraditional students.

303 (d) Higher education seeks to enhance state efforts to  
304 diversify and expand the economy by focusing available resources  
305 on programs and courses that best serve students, provide the  
306 greatest opportunity for job creation and retention and are most  
307 supportive of emerging high-technology and knowledge-based  
308 businesses and industries.

309 (e) Higher education creates a learning environment  
310 that is student-friendly and which encourages and assists students  
311 in the completion of degree requirements, certifications or skill  
312 sets within a reasonable period of time.



313 (f) The learning environment expands participation for  
314 the increasingly diverse student population and responds to the  
315 needs of the current workforce and other nontraditional students.

316 (g) Through the establishment of innovative curricula  
317 and assessment efforts, state institutions of higher learning  
318 ensure that students graduate from nationally recognized and  
319 accredited programs and meet or exceed national and international  
320 standards for performance in their chosen fields as evidenced  
321 through placement and professional licensure examinations.

322 (h) Higher education promotes academic research and  
323 innovation to achieve measurable growth in Mississippi's  
324 knowledge-based economic sector.

325 (i) State institutions of higher learning emphasize  
326 productivity and strive to exceed the performance and productivity  
327 levels of peer institutions. In return, and within the  
328 constraints of fiscal responsibility, the state seeks to invest in  
329 institutions so that they may adequately compensate faculty,  
330 classified employees and other employees at a competitive level to  
331 attract and retain high quality personnel.

332 (j) State institutions of higher learning are committed  
333 to a shared responsibility with faculty, staff, students and their  
334 communities to provide access to the knowledge and to promote  
335 acquisition of the skills and abilities necessary to establish and  
336 maintain physical fitness and wellness.



337 (i) Programs that encourage healthy lifestyles are  
338 essential for the vibrancy of the institutions of higher learning,  
339 for the well-being of the communities they serve and for the state  
340 as a whole.

341 (ii) Increasing the fitness levels of adults on  
342 college and university campuses is critically important for the  
343 people of Mississippi, not only for disease prevention, but also,  
344 and perhaps most importantly, to enhance the overall quality of  
345 life.

346 (iii) While individuals must bear the primary  
347 responsibility for their own health, it is imperative that the  
348 institutions provide appropriate education and support focused on  
349 enriching and expanding the short and longterm views and attitudes  
350 toward physical activity, understanding the principles of wellness  
351 and their application to a healthy lifestyle, understanding what  
352 components are a necessary part of an all-round healthy lifestyle  
353 and learning how to set and achieve realistic goals aimed at  
354 establishing healthy habits for the benefit of long-term health  
355 and well-being.

356 **SECTION 6.** (1) The State of Mississippi must create and  
357 participate in a partnership across various education  
358 organizations which recognizes the valuable contributions each  
359 member of the group can make. In addition to public education in  
360 Mississippi, and in addition to the State of Mississippi, key  
361 members of this partnership must include the state institutions of



higher learning, community and junior colleges, the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges and the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning.

(2) The state institutions of higher learning and community and junior colleges must serve as the cornerstone of efforts to provide higher education services that meet the needs of state citizens. To varying degrees, and depending upon their missions, these institutions must serve the state in three (3) major ways:

(a) Instruction. By providing direct instruction to students along with the student services necessary to support the instructional mission. These services have two (2) primary goals:

(i) To produce college graduates who have the knowledge, skills and desire to make valuable contributions to society; and

(ii) To provide opportunities for citizens to engage in lifelong learning to enhance their employability and their overall quality of life.

(b) Public service. By providing an occupational home for experts in a variety of fields and by serving as the educational home for students. In these capacities, institutions shall create a large and varied pool of high quality human resources capable of making valuable contributions to business and industry, local and state governments and communities. The following are examples of the types of public service that higher education institutions must offer:





(i) Workforce development, primarily through community and junior colleges, to meet the immediate and long-term needs of employers and employees;

(ii) Technical assistance to state and local policymakers as they work to address challenges as diverse as ensuring that Mississippi's citizens receive quality health care, assisting in the development of a solid transportation infrastructure and ensuring that public school teachers have enriching professional development opportunities; and

(iii) Opportunities to learn and serve in local communities, to teach civic responsibility and to encourage civic engagement.

(c) Research. By conducting research at state institutions of higher learning, to enhance the quality of life in Mississippi in the following ways:

(i) Targeting cutting-edge research toward solving pressing societal problems;

(ii) Promoting economic development by raising the level of education and specialization among the population; and

(iii) Creating jobs through development of new products and services.

(3) In their role as state-level coordinating boards, the State Board for Community Colleges and the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning must function as important partners with state policy leaders in providing higher education



that meets state needs. The boards shall provide service to the state in the following ways:

(a) By developing a public policy agenda for various aspects of higher education which is aligned with state goals and objectives and by defining the role and responsibilities of each coordinating board;

(b) By ensuring that institutional missions and goals are aligned with relevant parts of the public policy agenda and that institutions maximize the resources available to them to fulfill their missions and make reasonable progress toward meeting established state goals;

(c) By evaluating and reporting on progress in implementing the public policy agenda;

(d) By promoting system efficiencies through collaboration and cooperation across institutions and through focusing institutional missions as appropriate; and

(e) By conducting research, collecting data and providing objective recommendations to aid elected state officials in making policy decisions.

(4) Elected state-level policymakers shall serve the state in the following ways:

(a) By establishing goals, objectives and priorities for higher education based on a thoughtful, systematic determination of state needs;



436                   (b) By providing resources necessary to address state  
437 goals, objectives and priorities for higher education; and

438                   (c) By providing incentives for and removing barriers  
439 to the achievement of state goals, objectives and priorities.

440           **SECTION 7.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
441 and after July 1, 2025.

