

By: Representative Scott

To: Education

## HOUSE BILL NO. 373

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS PLANNING  
2 PROGRAM IN ORDER TO LOWER EDUCATIONAL COSTS, SHORTEN A STUDENT'S  
3 TIME TO COMPLETE A DEGREE AND INCREASE THE OVERALL SUCCESS RATE OF  
4 STUDENTS BY REDUCING THE NEED FOR REMEDIATION; TO REQUIRE PUBLIC  
5 SCHOOLS TO ADMINISTER CERTAIN ASSESSMENTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE THAT  
6 STUDENTS HAVE THE CAREER READINESS SKILLS NECESSARY TO COMPETE IN  
7 THE GLOBAL ECONOMY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

9 **SECTION 1.** The Legislature finds that:

10 (a) Many students enter college unprepared for the  
11 academic rigors of college and require noncredit remedial courses  
12 to attain skills and knowledge needed for regular credit  
13 coursework;

14 (b) There is a direct and significant link between  
15 students being prepared academically for college and success in  
16 postsecondary endeavors;

17 (c) Remediation lengthens the time required to obtain a  
18 degree, imposes additional costs on students and colleges, and  
19 uses student financial aid for courses that will not count toward  
20 a degree;



(d) A precollege readiness assessment program in public high schools using pre-ACT or pre-SAT assessments will provide early benchmarks for student performance on college readiness exams and inform high school guidance counselors and teachers who assist students with academic achievement, course selection and college readiness skills;

(e) A precollege readiness assessment program will provide reportable statewide data, enabling policy and program development that will benefit schools, parents and students; and

(f) Consistent use of precollege assessments will increase the number of successful student transitions into postsecondary education.

**SECTION 2.** (1) As used in this section:

(a) "College readiness assessment" means a test of student educational development which measures student readiness for future learning that is used by:

(i) Institutions of higher education as part of their admissions, placement and scholarship processes; and

(ii) High schools to improve college and workforce readiness.

(b) "College and career readiness" means that a student is academically ready to succeed in college-level courses or in the workforce without the need to enroll in remedial courses during the student's first year.



45 (c) "EXPLORE" means the pre-ACT assessment designed to  
46 help students in eighth grade explore a broad range of options for  
47 their future and focus not only on high school coursework, but  
48 also on post-high school choices.

49 (d) "PLAN" means the pre-ACT assessment for students in  
50 tenth grade used to help a student focus attention on improved  
51 academic achievement, career preparation and planning for  
52 post-high school years.

53 (e) "PSAT" means the Preliminary SAT/National Merit  
54 Scholarship Qualifying Test that provides practice for the SAT  
55 Reasoning Test and gives students feedback on individual strengths  
56 and weaknesses on college readiness skills.

57 (2) (a) (i) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, each  
58 public school that serves students in eighth grade shall  
59 administer EXPLORE to each student enrolled in eighth grade at the  
60 public school.

61 (ii) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year,  
62 each public school that serves students in tenth grade shall  
63 administer PLAN or the PSAT to each student enrolled in tenth  
64 grade at the public school.

65 (b) Funding for the college readiness assessments  
66 listed in paragraph (a) of this subsection may be paid by using  
67 State Department of Education at-risk funding.

68 (3) (a) Each public school administering the college  
69 readiness assessments under this section shall use the college



70 readiness assessments to assist students with college and  
71 workforce readiness skills, course selection in high school and  
72 improved academic achievement.

73 (b) Before the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year,  
74 each public school shall incorporate the results from college  
75 readiness assessments listed in subsection (2)(a) of this section  
76 into the college and career planning process for each student.

77 (4) Data collection shall be maintained by the State  
78 Department of Education for the purpose of:

- 79 (a) Increasing college and career readiness skills;
- 80 (b) Improving instruction;
- 81 (c) Enhancing school improvement plans; and
- 82 (d) Reducing the college remediation rates of students.

83 (5) The State Department of Education shall report to the  
84 House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education  
85 before September 30, 2028, and each year thereafter, on the  
86 implementation and effectiveness of the College and Career  
87 Readiness Planning Program.

88 (6) The department shall promulgate rules to implement this  
89 section and shall monitor the use of college readiness assessments  
90 administered under this section to ensure public school  
91 compliance.

92 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
93 and after July 1, 2025.

