

By: Representative Roberson

To: Education;
Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1528

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE MISSISSIPPI YOUNG READERS CLUB (MYRC)
2 TO PROVIDE DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE BOOKS AND LITERACY
3 MATERIALS TO PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 5 STUDENTS READING
4 BELOW GRADE LEVEL; TO OUTLINE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS,
5 PARTICIPATION STRATEGIES, AND ADMINISTRATION BY THE STATE
6 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; TO DEFINE PARTNERSHIPS FOR BOOK
7 SELECTION, DISTRIBUTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; TO PROMOTE
8 FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN HOME LITERACY DEVELOPMENT; TO PROVIDE THAT
9 THE LEGISLATURE SHALL APPROPRIATE \$2,000,000.00 TO THE STATE
10 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO BE ALLOCATED TO SELECTED PARTNERS FOR
11 THE PURPOSE OF DEFRAYING THE COST OF BOOK PURCHASES AND DIRECT
12 SHIPMENTS TO PARTICIPATING STUDENTS; TO REQUIRE ANNUAL PROGRAM
13 EVALUATION AND LEGISLATIVE REPORTING; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

15 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is hereby created the Mississippi
16 Young Readers Club (MYRC), administered by the State Department of
17 Education to provide developmentally appropriate books and
18 literacy materials to students in prekindergarten through Grade 5
19 who are reading below grade level. The program shall be designed
20 and administered in such a manner as to compliment existing
21 literacy efforts, including the Literacy-Based Promotion Act and
22 the Mississippi Comprehensive Literacy Plan, by supporting early
23 literacy development and building home libraries.



SECTION 2.

(1) Students in prekindergarten through Grade 5 are eligible for the inclusion in the Mississippi Young Readers Club program if they meet one or more of the following criteria:

(a) Students in prekindergarten through Grade 3 who are identified through literacy assessments as not meeting grade-level reading benchmarks;

(b) Students in Grades 4 and 5 who scored below proficiency on the most recent state reading assessments;

(c) Students recommended by teachers, reading specialists, or intervention teams based on classroom performance and ongoing assessments.

(2) Enrollment in the program shall be facilitated through various channels to maximize participation among eligible students, including:

(a) The recommendation of the program, by teachers to families of children evidencing a reading deficiency, as a supplemental resource to enhance at-home reading, consistent with the Literacy-Based Promotion Act;

(b) The introduction of the program to families of children evidencing a reading deficiency by school counselors and reading specialists during intervention meetings;

(c) Schools being authorized to provide enrollment details which accompany the issuance of student report cards or literacy assessments; and



(d) The engagement of school literacy teams by the State Department of Education to promote the program as part of broader literacy intervention efforts.

SECTION 3. (1) The State Department of Education is authorized to establish a collaborative partnership with an experienced organization for the selection, promotion and distribution of books and materials. The partnership shall ensure the selected books and literary materials:

(a) Are aligned with Mississippi's literacy standards and promote grade-level reading proficiency;

(b) Are engaging, developmentally appropriate and accessible for striving readers;

(c) Are mailed directly to participating students' homes monthly for duration of the calendar year; and

(d) Include strategies to raise awareness about the program and promote home libraries.

(2) Participating students shall receive one (1) age-appropriate book per month, aligned to their reading level, delivered directly to their homes. Each book shipment shall include family support materials with:

(a) Guidelines for shared reading practices;

(b) Activities to encourage at-home reading; and

(c) Multilingual options to support the diversities which exist amongst Mississippi's communities.



(3) The program shall promote family engagement by providing inclusive resources that support literacy development at home.

(4) The department shall offer guidance on integrating reading into daily family routines to foster a culture of literacy and learning.

(5) The Legislature shall appropriate Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00) to the State Department of Education to be allocated to selected partners for the purpose of defraying the cost of book purchases and direct shipments to participating students.

SECTION 4. (1) The State Department of Education shall collect and analyze data to assess the program's effectiveness, focusing on metrics of:

- (a) Frequency of home reading activities;
- (b) Changes in student reading interest and engagement;
- and
- (c) Feedback from families and educators.

(2) The data collected by the department under subsection (1) shall be compiled in an annual report presented to the Mississippi Legislature on or before December 15. In addition to the required aforementioned data, the report shall, include:

- (a) The number of students and families served;
- (b) Data on family engagement and home library use;
- (c) Program impact on student reading outcomes; and



(d) Recommendations for program improvement and expansion.

SECTION 5. (1) The organization selected in accordance with Section 4 shall collaborate with State Department of Education to engage local businesses, libraries and literacy organizations to enhance program resources and support, and host community literacy events to celebrate reading and foster engagement. Additionally, the organization may provide supplementary resources, such as workshops and tools, to strengthen home literacy environments.

(2) All partnerships authorized under this act shall align with the program's educational goals and support the mission of the Mississippi Young Readers Club to improve literacy outcomes statewide.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2025.

