

By: Representative McCarty

To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 1563

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL BUSINESS
2 OFFICIALS IN MISSISSIPPI TO FACILITATE KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE, IMPROVE
3 PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS, AND ENHANCE THE EFFICIENCY AND
4 EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT; TO
5 PROVIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM BY THE MISSISSIPPI
6 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MISSISSIPPI
7 ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS; TO SET ELIGIBILITY
8 REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES; TO PROVIDE
9 FOR PROGRAM EVALUATION AND ANNUAL REPORTING; TO REQUIRE THE
10 MISSISSIPPI ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS TO CONDUCT
11 ANNUAL WORKSHOPS FOR ALL MENTORS TO DEFINE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE
12 MENTORING PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

14 **SECTION 1.** There is hereby created the School Business
15 Officers Mentorship Program to support the professional
16 development of school business officials across Mississippi to
17 facilitate the exchange of knowledge, enhance problem-solving
18 skills, and strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of school
19 financial and operational management.

20 **SECTION 2.** As used in this act, the following terms have the
21 meanings ascribed herein, unless context of use clearly requires
22 otherwise:



(a) "Association" means the Mississippi Association of School Business Officials.

(b) "Department" means the State Department of Education.

(c) "Mentorship Program" means the Mississippi School Business Officials Mentorship Program established under this act.

(d) "Mentor" means a school business official with at least five (5) years of experience, including at least three (3) years in their current position, and actively engaged in supporting the program.

(e) "Mentee" means a school business official who is new to their position or requires guidance to enhance their professional skills.

SECTION 3. (1) The State Department of Education in association with the Mississippi Association of School Business Officers shall establish and jointly administer the Mississippi School Business Officials Mentorship Program.

(2) The program shall:

(a) Operate on an annual cycle from July 1 through June 30;

(b) Match mentees with mentors based on criteria including technical needs, project orientation, district size and geographic location;

(c) Require mentors to commit at least twenty-four (24) hours per year to mentoring activities; and



(d) Provide mentees and mentors access to training and program resources.

(3) The department shall oversee the development of mentorship guidelines, applications for mentors and mentees, and a reporting system to evaluate program effectiveness.

SECTION 4. (1) To qualify as a mentor, an individual must:

(a) Have a minimum of five (5) years of experience as a school business official;

(b) Be actively employed in their current role as a school business or finance officer for at least three (3) years; and

(c) Submit an application by April 30 of each year.

(2) To qualify as a mentee, an individual must:

(a) Be a new school business official or an existing official transitioning to a new role; and

(b) Submit an application by May 30 of each year.

(3) Participation in the program shall be voluntary and free of charge for all active members of the program, may consist of mentorship activities that include, but are not limited to, in-person meetings, phone consultations and online communication.

(4) The Mississippi Association of School Business Officials shall have one or more workshops annually for all mentors to define the objectives of the mentoring program, review the responsibilities of the mentors, and provide the mentors other information and assistance the department deems necessary. The



73 workshops shall utilize delivery strategies identified as
74 appropriate for staff development and reflect information gathered
75 through feedback from workshop participants.

76 (5) Mentorship program participants shall complete
77 evaluations to assess the quality and impact of the mentorship
78 experience.

79 **SECTION 5.** The State Department of Education shall submit an
80 annual report to the Governor and the Legislature detailing
81 program participation, outcomes and recommendations for
82 improvement.

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

