

By: Representatives Scott (17th), Barnett  
(92nd), Broomfield, Chaney, Coleman (65th),  
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To: Education;  
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 973  
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO  
2 IMPLEMENT A PILOT PROGRAM TO ASSIST IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FAMILY  
3 SUPPORT CENTERS AND PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE  
4 GOAL OF FAMILY SUPPORT CENTERS AND PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS SHALL  
5 BE TO CREATE A BETTER LIFE FOR MISSISSIPPI FAMILIES AND CHILDREN;  
6 TO SPECIFY CERTAIN PROGRAMS TO BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH FAMILY  
7 SUPPORT CENTERS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH AN  
8 APPLICATION PROCESS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO  
9 REQUIRE APPLICANTS TO HAVE IN PLACE AN ADVISORY BOARD FOR THE  
10 FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER; TO AUTHORIZE THE DEPARTMENT TO USE  
11 AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR GRANTS TO PARTICIPATING FAMILY SUPPORT  
12 CENTERS; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO APPOINT AN ADVISORY  
13 COMMITTEE TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN PROMULGATING REGULATIONS FOR  
14 THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT TO RECOMMEND TO THE  
15 LEGISLATURE WHETHER OR NOT THE PROGRAM SHOULD BE PERMANENTLY  
16 ESTABLISHED; TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO  
17 DEVELOP A REPORTING PROCESS ON EXISTING EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS  
18 IN THE STATE; TO CODIFY SECTION 37-57-102, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF  
19 1972, TO CLARIFY THE DEFINITION OF "PROPERTY" FOR SCHOOL AD  
20 VALOREM TAX PURPOSES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

22 SECTION 1. (1) The State Department of Education, in its  
23 discretion, may develop and implement a pilot program to assist in  
24 the establishment of community-based family support centers and  
25 individual family or parent education services. The goal of the  
26 programs shall be to create a better life for families and  
27 children in Mississippi, with emphasis being placed on the  
28 emotional, physical, social and mental needs of the whole family.

29 The family support centers and family or parent education service  
30 programs shall provide parents with opportunities to voluntarily  
31 obtain support and services that will enable them to provide  
32 optimum learning environments for their children, particularly  
33 from birth to the age of three (3) years, within the home. The  
34 family support centers shall serve to build community networks to  
35 support children and families through the implementation of the  
36 following care activities: parenting classes; developmental

37 programs for prekindergarten-age children during parent education  
38 classes; support groups; individual family or parent education  
39 services; a resource library; and resource and referral services.

40 Additional services may be provided to meet the identified family  
41 needs of the community and in keeping with the goals of the  
42 program. The family support centers shall focus on school  
43 readiness and early literacy.

44 (2) Under the pilot program, the department shall establish  
45 a procedure for interested school districts and other nonprofit  
46 entities in partnership with a school district to apply for  
47 assistance in establishing a family support center. At least one  
48 (1) family support center shall be established in each  
49 congressional district.

50 (3) Under the pilot program, the department shall establish  
51 a procedure for interested school districts and other nonprofit  
52 entities in partnership with a school district to apply for  
53 individual family or parent education programs. Programs must use  
54 research based, independently evaluated, proven research models  
55 that are documented to have a positive impact on reducing special  
56 education placements, development of language and social skills,  
57 and parental involvement in schools.

58 (4) As part of the application process for participation in  
59 the pilot program, applicants must demonstrate to the department  
60 that the family support center is a collaborative undertaking of  
61 various community organizations. Each applicant must have created  
62 an advisory board for the family support center or parent  
63 education services programs, involving the participation of the  
64 local school district or districts, the city and county governing  
65 authorities, the county health department, regional mental health  
66 centers, the extension service, representatives of the Department  
67 of Human Services and any other private or public entities  
68 participating in the partnership.

69 (5) The State Department of Education may accept any funds,  
70 public or private, made available to the department for the pilot  
71 program. The funds shall be used to award grants to the  
72 participating family support centers or family or parent education  
73 services programs for the support of such programs. A family  
74 support center or family or parent education services program may

75 use any available funding to support the administration and  
76 programs of the center or education services program.

77 (6) The State Department of Education shall promulgate  
78 rules and regulations necessary for the proper administration of  
79 this section. An advisory group shall be established to assist in  
80 the development of the rules and regulations for administration of  
81 the program. Members of the advisory group shall include, but not  
82 be limited to, representatives of the following categories:  
83 parents; local school districts' parent education programs staff;  
84 the Department of Human Services, Division of Family and  
85 Children's Services; Head Start; the cooperative extension  
86 services; and USOE funded parental assistance programs.

87 (7) If the family support center and family or parent  
88 education services pilot programs authorized by this section are  
89 implemented, the State Department of Education shall report to the  
90 Legislature, within three (3) years after the pilot program's  
91 implementation, on the desirability of expanding and permanently  
92 establishing the program.

93 (8) The State Department of Education shall develop an  
94 annual reporting process to inform the Legislature, local school  
95 district personnel and the general public as to all programs  
96 funded under this legislation:

97 (a) Number of students and families served;

98 (b) Number of teachers and other personnel,  
99 certification and experience levels;

100 (c) Source of funds for each program;

101 (d) Budget, administrative costs and other pertinent  
102 fiscal information;

103 (e) Salary and fringe benefit information for each  
104 employee in an early childhood program;

105 (f) Cost of materials and other instructional costs  
106 related to an early childhood program;

107 (g) Other information as directed by the State Board of  
108 Education; and

109 (h) Analysis of this program's impact on Grades K-3.

110 SECTION 2. The following provision shall be codified as

111 Section 37-57-102, Mississippi Code of 1972:

112 37-57-102. For purposes of this chapter, the term "property"

113 shall have such meaning as is prescribed by Section 1-3-45,

114 Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended.

115 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from

116 and after July 1, 1999.