

By: Flaggs

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 17

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
2 DEVELOP A MENTORING PROGRAM UNDER WHICH LOCAL PROFESSIONALS
3 VOLUNTEER TO MENTOR TO STUDENTS ON A ONE-ON-ONE BASIS; AND FOR
4 RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 SECTION 1. (1) The State Department of Education shall
7 develop a mentoring program for the purpose of helping to promote
8 confidence and self-esteem in youth. Under the program, a school
9 district may arrange for professionals within the local community
10 to volunteer to act as mentors to students.

11 (2) The teachers and principal in a school shall select
12 students for participation in the mentoring program. Priority
13 shall be given to those students considered to be at risk.

14 (3) Each professional participating in the program shall be
15 assigned to act as the mentor for one (1) student for the school
16 year. The school district shall allow for mentors to meet weekly
17 with the students at the school throughout the school year.

18 (4) The goals and objectives of a professional participating
19 in the mentoring program shall include the following:

20 (a) To develop an ongoing relationship with the student
21 and to provide positive attention, support and inspiration to the
22 student;

23 (b) On an academic level, to encourage the student by
24 assisting with class work and test preparations and by conferring
25 with the student's teachers;

26 (c) To reinforce the importance of academics to the
27 student by praising him or her for classroom accomplishments and
28 by serving as personal proof to the student that an education can
29 lead to a better life;

30 (d) To encourage the student on a personal level
31 through guidance and counseling as a caring and thoughtful adult
32 who listens as a friend and nurtures the student's interests and
33 talents; and

34 (e) To encourage proper behavior by the student,
35 consistent with state and federal law, school rules and other
36 sources of authority.

37 (5) Subject to the availability of appropriations, the State
38 Department of Education shall allocate funds to those school
39 districts participating in the mentoring program to help defray
40 any costs incurred in association with the program.

41 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
42 and after July 1, 2000.