

By: Senator(s) Chaney, Burton, Kirby,
Michel, Jackson, Jordan, Tollison, Nunnelee,
Carmichael

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2578
(As Sent to Governor)

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-16-11, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO DEVELOP AND ISSUE
3 CRITERIA FOR AN OCCUPATIONAL DIPLOMA FOR STUDENTS WITH
4 DISABILITIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 37-16-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 37-16-11. (1) A student who has been properly classified,
9 in accordance with rules established by the state board as
10 "educable mentally retarded," "trainable mentally retarded,"
11 "deaf," "specific learning disabled," "physically handicapped
12 whose ability to communicate orally or in writing is seriously
13 impaired" or "emotionally handicapped" shall not be required to
14 meet all requirements of Section 37-16-7, and shall, upon meeting
15 all applicable requirements prescribed by the district school
16 board, be awarded a special diploma in a form prescribed by the
17 state board; provided, however, that such special graduation
18 requirements prescribed by the district school board shall include
19 minimum graduation requirements as prescribed by the state board.
20 Any such student who meets all special requirements of the
21 district school board for his exceptionality, but is unable to
22 meet the appropriate special state minimum requirements, shall be
23 awarded a special certificate of completion in a form prescribed
24 by the state board. Nothing provided in this section, however,
25 shall be construed to limit or restrict the right of an
26 exceptional student solely to a special diploma. Any such student
27 shall, upon proper request, be afforded the opportunity to fully

28 meet all requirements of Section 37-16-7 through the standard
29 procedures established therein and thereby qualify for a standard
30 diploma upon graduation.

31 (2) The State Board of Education shall develop and issue
32 criteria for a Mississippi Occupational Diploma for students
33 having a disability as defined by the federal Individuals with
34 Disabilities Education Act. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school
35 year, any such student, upon proper request, shall be afforded the
36 opportunity to fully meet such requirements and qualify for an
37 occupational diploma upon graduation.

38 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
39 and after July 1, 2001.