

By: Representatives Eads, Whittington

To: Education;
Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1344

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE PREK-20 EDUCATION COORDINATING ENTITY;
2 TO CHARGE THE ENTITY WITH THE DUTY TO MAKE A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY
3 OF METHODS TO BETTER ALIGN POLICIES AND PRACTICES ACROSS
4 EDUCATIONAL SECTORS AND TO SUBMIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY
5 THE LEGISLATURE AND THE AGENCIES, DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES AND
6 INSTITUTIONS OF THE STATE; TO PROVIDE FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE
7 ENTITY; TO PROVIDE THAT THE ENTITY SHALL MAKE A REPORT OF ITS WORK
8 TO THE LEGISLATURE AND THE GOVERNOR BEFORE DECEMBER 1, 2002; AND
9 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

11 **SECTION 1.** The Legislature finds that because the quality of
12 education has a profound impact upon the social, cultural and
13 economic enhancement of the people of Mississippi, the following
14 are some of the educational goals of the state:

15 (a) That the students, parents, general citizenry,
16 local school teachers and administrators, local governments, local
17 school boards, colleges, universities and state government shall
18 share the responsibility for the quality of education delivered
19 through the educational systems in the State of Mississippi:

20 (i) To produce a functionally literate school
21 population;

22 (ii) To ensure that all students master the most
23 essential parts of a basic education;

24 (iii) To encourage the common efforts of students,
25 parents, teachers, administrators and business and professional
26 leaders for the establishment of specific goals for performance;

27 (iv) To improve instructional and administrative
28 quality, to relate the education community to other policymakers
29 and to achieve increased competency among students, teachers and
30 administrators;



31 (b) That emphasis shall be placed upon early mastery of
32 the skills necessary to success in school and that quality,
33 performance-based early childhood education programs shall be
34 considered an essential element of a comprehensive education
35 system;

36 (c) That the children of this state shall receive a
37 period of instruction sufficient to train each in the basic
38 educational skills adequate for the student to take his or her
39 place in society and make a contribution as a citizen of this
40 state, and that all children shall be encouraged to continue their
41 education until they have completed high school;

42 (d) That the high school students of this state shall
43 receive the opportunity and encouragement to complete a college
44 preparation curriculum; and

45 (e) That the citizenry of this state shall have access
46 to programs in adult lifelong learning, worker training and
47 professional development activities.

48 **SECTION 2.** (1) There is created the PreK-20 Education
49 Coordinating Entity, the duties of which shall be to study the
50 methods to better align policies and practices across educational
51 sectors and specifically to:

52 (a) Determine methods by which Mississippi could launch
53 a broad public campaign directed to all segments of the population
54 underscoring the importance of high school completion, advanced
55 education and adult lifelong learning;

56 (b) Develop ways to expand and improve prekindergarten
57 programs for children in all areas of the state by establishing
58 pilot projects in selected school districts, using college-student
59 volunteers and creating partnerships among the state's schools,
60 colleges, universities, social service agencies and providers;

61 (c) Make a comprehensive study of those school
62 districts ranking lowest on the state's accreditation measures and
63 create guidelines for enhancing partnerships between those school



64 districts and the teaching programs in the colleges and
65 universities;

66 (d) Develop a business plan to strengthen teacher
67 supply and quality in all academic areas;

68 (e) Research ways to obtain federal funds to help
69 increase advanced placement course offerings throughout the state;

70 (f) Design methods to develop better pre-service and
71 in-service training for school principals through a coordinated
72 approach among the institutions of higher learning, the community
73 colleges and the State Department of Education;

74 (g) Facilitate partnerships among college and
75 university faculty and school administrators and teachers to
76 develop a school-based strategic research plan to address real
77 needs in the classroom;

78 (h) Develop a plan to promote the college prep
79 curriculum and to encourage all high school students to complete
80 it;

81 (i) Conduct a study of the state's human resource needs
82 and reshape educational offerings in adult lifelong learning,
83 worker training and professional development; and

84 (j) Review possibilities of creating proactive
85 partnerships with business and industry that will enable the
86 state's colleges and universities to become full partners in
87 economic development.

88 (2) The PreK-20 Education Coordinating Entity shall be
89 composed of seventeen (17) members as follows:

90 (a) The Executive Director of Public Education Forum;

91 (b) The Chairman of the State Board of Education;

92 (c) The Chairman of the State Board for Community and
93 Junior Colleges;

94 (d) The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of State
95 Institutions of Higher Learning;



96 (e) The Director of Mississippi Private School
97 Association;

98 (f) Twelve (12) other persons appointed by the
99 Governor. In making appointments to the entity, the Governor
100 shall:

101 (i) Endeavor to achieve a diverse representation
102 of the citizens of our state, with all socioeconomic and cultural
103 populations and geographical areas of the state being represented;

104 (ii) Appoint representatives of the following
105 professions, distinct communities or special interest groups:
106 public and private school teachers, public and private school
107 principals, business leaders, college and university faculty
108 members and parents of school-age children;

109 (iii) Endeavor to ensure that at least one-third
110 (1/3) of his appointments consist of individuals who work directly
111 with the school students in some capacity;

112 (3) At its first meeting, the entity shall elect a chairman
113 and vice chairman from its membership and shall adopt rules for
114 transacting its business and keeping records. Members of the
115 entity shall receive a per diem in the amount provided in Section
116 25-3-69 for each day engaged in the business of the entity.
117 Members of the entity shall receive reimbursement for travel
118 expenses incurred while engaged in official business of the entity
119 in accordance with Section 25-3-41.

120 (4) Before December 1, 2002, the entity shall make a report
121 of its work and recommendations for action, and it shall submit a
122 copy of the report to the Legislature and the Governor.

123 (5) The entity shall be assigned to the Governor's Office
124 for administrative purposes only, and the Governor's Office shall
125 designate staff to assist the entity. The entity may solicit
126 grants, donations and other funds and may accept and expend any
127 funds that are made available to the entity to carry out its
128 purpose.



129 (6) All agencies, departments, offices and institutions of
130 the state, including the state universities and the community and
131 junior colleges, shall cooperate with the entity with such
132 assistance as requested by the entity.

133 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
134 and after July 1, 2002.

