

By: Senator(s) Harden

To: Education;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2498

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-151-77, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO REDUCE THE REQUIRED PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO FOR CLASSES FUNDED
3 UNDER THE MISSISSIPPI ADEQUATE EDUCATION PROGRAM ON A PHASED-IN
4 BASIS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-151-77, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 37-151-77. To qualify for funds provided in this chapter,
9 each school district shall not exceed a pupil-teacher ratio based
10 on enrollment in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4 as follows:

- 11 School Year 2002-2003: 22/1
- 12 School Year 2003-2004: 21/1
- 13 School Year 2004-2005: 20/1
- 14 School Year 2005-2006: 19/1
- 15 School Year 2006-2007: 18/1

16 For Grades * * * 5 through 12, pupil-teacher ratio shall be
17 determined based on appropriate accreditation standards developed
18 by the Mississippi Commission on School Accreditation.

19 Any local district may apply to the State Board of Education
20 for approval of a waiver to this section by submitting and
21 justifying an alternative educational program to serve the needs
22 of enrollment in Grades Kindergarten and 1 through 4. The State
23 Board of Education shall approve or disapprove of such waiver
24 forty-five (45) days after receipt of such application. If a
25 school district violates the provisions of this section, the state
26 aid for the ensuing fiscal year to such school district shall be
27 reduced by the percentage variance that the actual pupil-teacher
28 ratios in such school district has to the required pupil-teacher



29 ratios mandated in this section. Provided, that notwithstanding
30 the provisions of this section, the State Board of Education is
31 authorized to waive the pupil-teacher requirements specified
32 herein upon a finding that a good faith effort is being made by
33 the school district concerned to comply with the ratio provisions
34 but that for lack of classroom space which was beyond its control
35 it is physically impossible for the district to comply, and the
36 cost of temporary classroom space cannot be justified. In the
37 event any school district meets Level 4 or 5 accreditation
38 standards, the State Board of Education may, in its discretion,
39 exempt such school district from the maximum pupil-teacher ratio
40 in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4 prescribed herein.

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

