MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION 2007

By: Representatives Brown, Mayo

To: Education

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 833

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-7-335, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO SPECIFY THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH LOCAL SCHOOL BOARDS SHALL GRANT FINANCIAL HARDSHIP WAIVERS FROM THE PAYMENT OF CERTAIN FEES CHARGED BY THE SCHOOL BOARDS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-7-335, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-7-335. (1) The school board of any school district shall be authorized to charge reasonable fees, but not more than the actual cost, for the following:

(a) Supplemental instructional materials and supplies, excluding textbooks;

(b) Any other fees designated by the local school board as fees related to a valid curriculum educational objective, including transportation; and

(c) Extracurricular activities and any other educational activities of the school district that are not designated by the local school board as valid curriculum educational objectives, such as band trips and athletic events.

(2) (a) All fees authorized to be charged under this section, except those fees authorized under subsection (1)(c) of this section, shall be charged only upon the condition that the school board of each school district shall adopt a financial hardship waiver policy that shall be kept in the strictest of confidence with all files and personal disclosures restricted from review by the general public. The financial hardship waiver policy must be distributed in writing to pupils at the time of enrollment. Any family who qualifies for the National School

Lunch Program, as created by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 USCS Section 1751 et seq.), shall receive a financial hardship waiver.

The board shall insure that a pupil eligible to have any such fees waived as a result of an inability to pay for those fees, shall not be discriminated against nor shall there be any overt identification of any pupil who has received a financial hardship waiver by use of special tokens or tickets, announcements, posting or publication of names, physical separation, choice of materials or by any other means. In no case shall any school district's procedures expose any pupil receiving a hardship waiver to any type of stigma or ridicule by other pupils or school district personnel.

(b) The confidentiality of the financial hardship waiver policy adopted by the school board shall apply to any students who have an inability to pay any fees authorized under subsection (1) * * * of this section.

(3) In no case shall the inability to pay the assessment of fees authorized under the provisions of this section result in a pupil being denied or deprived of any academic awards or standards, any class selection, grade, diploma, transcript or the right to participate in any activity related to educational enhancement.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2007.