

By: Representative Roberson

To: Education;
Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 1447

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE "STRENGTHENING ACADEMIC VICTORIES
2 THROUGH EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY (SAVED
3 AT DSU) PILOT PROGRAM ACT"; TO DEFINE TERMINOLOGY; TO AUTHORIZE
4 THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DELTA STATE
5 UNIVERSITY, TO CREATE A MODEL RURAL EDUCATION SCHOOL PROGRAM TO
6 SERVE STUDENTS IN GRADES K-12 WITHIN THE DELTA COUNTIES WHO ARE
7 ENROLLED IN FAILING SCHOOLS OR FAILING SCHOOL DISTRICTS; TO
8 AUTHORIZE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
9 TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF DESIGNING,
10 CONSTRUCTING, MAINTAINING AND OPERATING A MODEL RURAL EDUCATION
11 SCHOOL AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS BETWEEN EACH OTHER FOR THOSE
12 PURPOSES; TO PROVIDE THAT THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR SHALL BE THE
13 PILOT PROGRAM'S FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION; TO REQUIRE THE STATE
14 BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS
15 OF HIGHER LEARNING TO JOINTLY GOVERN THE ACADEMY; TO REQUIRE THE
16 STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF
17 THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, TO APPOINT AN ADVISORY PANEL
18 TO ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN RELATING TO THE PILOT
19 PROGRAM; TO PRESCRIBE THE DUTIES OF THE ADVISORY PANEL; TO
20 PRESCRIBE THE REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE
21 STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND IHL BOARD TO COLLABORATIVELY PREPARE
22 THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR THE PILOT PROGRAM; TO REQUIRE THE STATE
23 BOARD OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT COMMUNITY MEETINGS IN EACH COUNTY OF
24 THE DELTA REGION BEFORE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT PROGRAM;
25 TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT
26 A REPORT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PILOT PROGRAM TO RAISE
27 STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TO THE GOVERNOR AND EDUCATION
28 CHAIRMEN OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; AND FOR
29 RELATED PURPOSES.

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



31 **SECTION 1.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the
32 "Strengthening Academic Victories through Educational Development
33 at Delta State University (SAVED at DSU) Pilot Program Act."

34 **SECTION 2.** As used in this act, the following terms shall
35 have the meanings ascribed in this section, unless context clearly
36 requires otherwise:

37 (a) "Board" means the State Board of Education.

38 (b) "Counties of the Delta region" include, Bolivar,
39 Carroll, Coahoma, Desoto, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore,
40 Panola, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica,
41 Warren, Washington and Yazoo Counties.

42 (c) "Department" means the State Department of
43 Education.

44 (d) "IHL Board" means the Board of Trustees of State
45 Institutions of Higher Learning.

46 (d) "Pilot program" means the Strengthening Academic
47 Victories through Educational Development at Delta State
48 University (SAVED at DSU) Pilot Program.

49 (e) "University" means Delta State University.

50 **SECTION 3.** (1) (a) The State Board of Education is
51 authorized and encouraged to develop a partnership with Delta
52 State University to create a model rural education school program,
53 known as the "Strengthening Academic Victories through Educational
54 Development at Delta State University (SAVED at DSU) Pilot
55 Program," to serve students in grades K-12 within the counties of



56 the Delta region of the state who are enrolled in failing schools
57 or failing school districts as designated by the State Board of
58 Education with the assignment of a "D" or "F" school
59 accountability rating, which such program shall also serve as a
60 model for the education of teachers and administrators.

61 (b) The State Board of Education and Delta State
62 University are authorized and empowered, in each's discretion, to
63 enter into an agreement for the purpose of designing,
64 constructing, maintaining and operating a model rural education
65 school to accomplish the purposes of this act.

66 (c) The State Board of Education and Delta State
67 University are further authorized and empowered, in each's
68 discretion, to transfer funds to the other and expend such funds
69 on mutually agreeable terms and conditions for the construction,
70 maintenance and operation of such school.

71 (2) The 2025-2026 school year shall be the first year that
72 the school shall admit students for enrollment, which shall:

73 (a) Be limited to students residing within the eighteen
74 (18) counties of the Mississippi Delta who are enrolled in failing
75 schools or failing school districts;

76 (b) Be offered as a day school program only for those
77 students eligible to attend who:

78 (i) Are enrolled in grades K-8 in their school
79 district of residence; and



80 (ii) Live in close enough proximity to the campus
81 of Delta State University, so as not to violate limitation on
82 transporting students in excess of thirty (30) miles to and from
83 their residence to the campus as prescribed in Section
84 37-15-29(3);

85 (c) Be offered as an optional residential school
86 program for those students eligible to attend who:

87 (i) Are enrolled in Grades 9-12 in their school
88 district of residence;

89 (ii) Reside beyond the allowable distance for
90 which the limitation on transporting students is prescribed under
91 Section 37-15-29(3).

92 **SECTION 4.** (1) The Strengthening Academic Victories through
93 Educational Development at Delta State University (SAVED at DSU)
94 Pilot Program shall be jointly governed by the State Board of
95 Education and the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of
96 Higher Learning, which shall promulgate rules and regulations
97 required for the administration and operation of the pilot
98 program. It shall be the duty of the boards, to:

99 (a) Develop a detailed plan relating to the opening,
100 operation and funding of the pilot program on the campus of Delta
101 State University to be presented to the Legislature during the
102 2025 Regular Session;

103 (b) Promulgate policies, rules and regulations
104 necessary for the administration and operation of the academy;



105 (c) Employ administrators, teachers and other licensed
106 and noninstructional personnel at the appropriate time for the
107 academy;

108 (d) Develop the annual budget for the academy; and

109 (e) Undertake any other actions that may be necessary
110 in the establishment and operation of the academy.

111 (2) The State Superintendent of Public Education, with the
112 assistance of the Commissioner of Higher Education, shall appoint
113 an advisory panel to assist in the development of the plan
114 relating to the pilot program. The advisory panel shall consist
115 of the following twelve (12) appointed or designated members:

116 (a) Three (3) licensed school teachers or school
117 facility administrators, to be appointed from either of the
118 counties of the Delta region;

119 (b) Three (3) school district superintendents, to be
120 appointed from either of the counties of the Delta region;

121 (c) Three (3) citizens who reside in either of the
122 counties of the Delta region and who has a compulsory-school-aged
123 child enrolled in a failing school or district;

124 (d) The President of Delta State University;

125 (e) The Dean of the College of Education and Human
126 Sciences or the Department Chair of the Division of Teacher
127 Education, Leadership, and Research at Delta State University; and

128 (f) The Superintendent of the Mississippi Achievement
129 School District.



130 (3) Appointments to the advisory panel shall be made within
131 thirty (30) days of passage of this act. The advisory panel shall
132 meet upon the call of the State Superintendent of Public Education
133 and Commission of Higher Education and shall organize for business
134 by selecting a chairman and vice chairman/secretary for keeping
135 records of the panel. Members of the advisory panel shall receive
136 no compensation but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses and
137 mileage for attending meetings and necessary business of the
138 panel, in the amount authorized for state employees under Section
139 25-3-41.

140 (4) The board may utilize the staff of the State Department
141 of Education, Delta State University and other state agencies as
142 may be required for the implementation of this act. The
143 department may employ any personnel deemed necessary by the board
144 for assisting in the development and implementation of the plan
145 relating to the opening, operation and funding the pilot program.
146 The board also may contract or enter into agreements with other
147 agencies or private entities which it deems necessary to carry out
148 its duties and functions relating to the opening and operation of
149 the school.

150 (5) To the extent possible, the board shall enter into
151 agreements with the Delta State University for the dual enrollment
152 of eligible students attending pilot program. The State Board of
153 Education, with the assistance of Delta State University, may
154 develop and issue necessary regulations for the coordination of



155 such courses for these students and the preparation and transfer
156 of transcripts upon completion and graduation.

157 **SECTION 5.** (1) The Strengthening Academic Victories through
158 Educational Development at Delta State University (SAVED at DSU)
159 Pilot Program shall:

160 (a) Establish minimum standards governing annual
161 increases in the academic performance indicators that are agreed
162 upon with the State Board of Education and Delta State University;

163 (b) No later than thirty (30) days following the
164 initial startup of the pilot program, conduct ongoing assessments
165 of student performance, including an initial baseline assessment
166 of knowledge and skills in each grade level and academic content
167 area in which instruction is provided;

168 (c) Establish data-driven instructional programs;

169 (d) Provide curriculum that is aligned with state
170 academic standards for college and career readiness;

171 (e) Provide a full-day kindergarten program;

172 (f) Provide appropriate educational programs for
173 students who are eligible for special education and related
174 services, English Language Learner services, and services for
175 exceptional children, as defined under Section 37-23-3;

176 (g) Develop appropriate educational goals for each
177 student and offer differentiated instruction to meet the needs of
178 all students;



179 (h) Provide academic supports and interventions,
180 including tutoring and other appropriate educational assistance,
181 that are targeted for students who perform below proficiency
182 standards on an academic performance indicator;

183 (i) Provide for a student-to-teacher ratio that does
184 not exceed 15:1 for elementary grades and 20:1 for secondary
185 grades;

186 (j) Provide for appropriate staffing that includes
187 positions and selection of staff to address the needs of the
188 students;

189 (k) Provide for a minimum of one thousand one hundred
190 (1,100) hours of elementary instruction or one thousand one
191 hundred ninety (1,190) hours of secondary instruction, as
192 applicable, which may include any of the following:

193 (i) An extended school day;

194 (ii) An extended school year;

195 (iii) A minimum of four (4) weeks of summer
196 school; and

197 (iv) Saturday instructional classes;

198 (l) Provide programs to improve parental involvement,
199 which may include:

200 (i) Creation of a school advisory council;

201 (ii) Professional development programs for

202 administrators, teachers and support professionals that focus on

203 communication centered upon students' academic goals with parents;



- 204 (iii) Interaction with family members from
205 different cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
- 206 (iv) Programs that provide instruction on
207 parenting skills and opportunities for parents to engage in the
208 operation of the pilot programs and its curriculum;
- 209 (v) Provision of supports to families for students
210 most at risk of academic failure, truancy and dropping out of
211 school by school-based social workers and home and school
212 visitors;
- 213 (vi) Programs to improve parent and student
214 satisfaction, which may include programs to improve communications
215 with parents and provide parents with opportunities to provide
216 feedback; and
- 217 (vii) Programs to improve access to intensive
218 social services for victory academic students and their families,
219 which may include family counseling services, home, school and
220 community safety programs and substance abuse treatment;
- 221 (m) Formulate and implement programs designed to
222 improve the learning environment and school culture, which shall
223 include measures to ensure the safety of students and staff, and
224 may include the following:
- 225 (i) Positive behavioral supports;
- 226 (ii) Professional development; and
- 227 (iii) Coordination with community partners.



228 **SECTION 6.** The State Board of Education and IHL Board shall
229 collaboratively prepare the annual budget for the pilot program.
230 For the operation and support of the pilot program, the board or
231 university may receive contributions, donations, gifts, bequests
232 of money, other forms of financial assistance and property,
233 equipment, materials or manpower from persons, foundations, trust
234 funds, corporations, organizations and other sources, public or
235 private, to be expended and utilized by the boards in carrying out
236 this act.

237 **SECTION 7.** Prior to the enrollment of students into the
238 Strengthening Academic Victories through Educational Development
239 at Delta State University (SAVED at DSU) Pilot Program, the State
240 Board of Education shall:

241 (a) Conduct at least two (2) community meetings at a
242 central designation location in each county of the Delta region,
243 to be held during the evening, which shall include a presentation
244 on the SAVED at DSU Pilot Program, distribution of information
245 materials and a question and answer session with parents and
246 community members to address the implementation of the pilot
247 program. Upon being notified by the State Department of Education
248 of a proposed meeting date, each school district within the
249 counties of the Delta region shall provide public notice for each
250 community meeting; and

251 (b) At least one (1) meeting for teachers and
252 administrators employed by school districts in the affected



253 counties of the Delta region and appropriate employees of Delta
254 State University, held at Delta State University, which shall
255 include a presentation on the SAVED at DSU Pilot Program with
256 information on how the implementation may impact staff employment
257 at the schools within the Delta region and at the university.

258 **SECTION 8.** (1) (a) The State Department of Education shall
259 make payments to Delta State University for each student in
260 average daily attendance at the SAVED at DSU Pilot Program equal
261 to the state share of the adequate education program payments for
262 each student in average daily attendance at the school district or
263 residence. In calculating the local contribution for purposes of
264 determining the state share of the adequate education program
265 payments, the department shall deduct the pro rata local
266 contribution of the school district in which the student resides,
267 to be determined as provided in Section 37-151-7(2) (a).

268 (b) Payments made pursuant to this subsection by the
269 department must be made at the same time and in the same manner as
270 adequate education program payments are made to school districts
271 under Sections 37-151-101 and 37-151-103. Amounts payable to the
272 university must be determined by the department. Amounts payable
273 to the university over term of the pilot program must be based on
274 the enrollment projections set forth over the designated term of
275 pilot program. Such projections must be reconciled with the
276 average daily attendance using months two (2) and three (3) ADA
277 for the current year for which adequate education program funds



278 are being appropriated and any necessary adjustments must be made
279 to payments during the pilot program's following year of
280 operation.

281 (2) For students attending the SAVED at DSU Pilot Program
282 located in the school district in which the student resides, the
283 school district in which the university is located shall pay
284 directly to the university an amount for each student enrolled in
285 the pilot program equal to the ad valorem tax receipts and in-lieu
286 payments received per pupil for the support of the local school
287 district in which the student resides. The pro rata ad valorem
288 receipts and in-lieu receipts to be transferred to the university
289 shall include all levies for the support of the local school
290 district under Sections 37-57-1 (local contribution to the
291 adequate education program) and 37-57-105 (school district
292 operational levy) and may not include any taxes levied for the
293 retirement of the local school district's bonded indebtedness or
294 short-term notes or any taxes levied for the support of
295 vocational-technical education programs. The amount of funds
296 payable to the university by the school district must be based on
297 the previous year's enrollment data and ad valorem receipts and
298 in-lieu receipts of the local school district in which the student
299 resides. The pro rata amount must be calculated by dividing the
300 local school district's months one (1) through nine (9) average
301 daily membership into the total amount of ad valorem receipts and
302 in-lieu receipts, as reported to the State Department of Education



303 by the local school district. The local school district shall pay
304 an amount equal to this pro rata amount multiplied by the number
305 of students enrolled in the pilot program, based on the program's
306 end of first month enrollment for the current school year. The
307 amount must be paid by the school district to the university
308 before January 16 of the current fiscal year. If the local school
309 district does not pay the required amount to the university before
310 January 16, the State Department of Education shall reduce the
311 local school district's January transfer of Mississippi Adequate
312 Education Program funds by the amount owed to the university and
313 shall redirect that amount to the university. Any such payments
314 made under this subsection (2) by the State Department of
315 Education to the university must be made at the same time and in
316 the same manner as adequate education program payments are made to
317 school districts under Sections 37-151-101 and 37-151-103.

318 (3) For students attending the SAVED at DSU Pilot Program
319 who do not reside in the district where the university is located,
320 the State Department of Education shall pay to the university an
321 amount as follows: the pro rata ad valorem receipts and in-lieu
322 payments per pupil for the support of the local school district in
323 which the student resides under Sections 37-57-1 (local
324 contribution to the adequate education program) and 37-57-105
325 (school district operational levy), however, not including any
326 taxes levied for the retirement of the local school district's
327 bonded indebtedness or short-term notes or any taxes levied for



328 the support of vocational-technical education programs. The
329 amount of funds payable to the university by the school district
330 must be based on the previous year's enrollment data and ad
331 valorem receipts and in-lieu receipts of the local school district
332 in which the student resides. The pro rata amount must be
333 calculated by dividing the local school district's months one (1)
334 through nine (9) average daily membership into the total amount of
335 ad valorem receipts and in-lieu receipts, as reported to the State
336 Department of Education by the transferor local school district.
337 The payable amount shall be equal to this pro rata amount
338 multiplied by the number of students enrolled in the pilot
339 program, based on the program's end of first month enrollment for
340 the current school year. The State Department of Education shall
341 reduce the school district's January transfer of Mississippi
342 Adequate Education Program funds by the amount owed to the
343 university and shall redirect that amount to the university. Any
344 such payments made under this subsection (3) by the State
345 Department of Education to the university must be made at the same
346 time and in the same manner as adequate education program payments
347 are made to school districts under Sections 37-151-101 and
348 37-151-103.

349 (4) (a) The State Department of Education shall direct the
350 proportionate share of monies generated under federal and state
351 categorical aid programs, including special education, vocational,
352 gifted and alternative school programs, if the pilot program



353 serves students eligible for such aid. The department shall
354 ensure that any expansion in enrollment within the pilot programs
355 is treated equitably in the calculation and disbursement of all
356 federal and state categorical aid program dollars. Provided that
357 the pilot programs serves students who may be eligible to receive
358 services provided through such programs, the university shall
359 comply with all reporting requirements to receive the aid.

360 (b) The university shall pay to a local school district
361 any federal or state aid attributable to a student with a
362 disability attending the charter school in proportion to the level
363 of services for that student which the local school district
364 provides directly or indirectly.

365 (5) (a) The State Department of Education shall disburse
366 state transportation funding to the university on the same basis
367 and in the same manner as it is paid to school districts under the
368 adequate education program, for those students deemed eligible for
369 transportations services in accordance with Section 3(2)(b) of
370 this act.

371 (b) The university may enter into a contract with a
372 school district or private provider to provide transportation to
373 the school's students.

374 **SECTION 9.** (1) Within thirty (30) days of the
375 conclusion of each scholastic year during the term of pilot
376 program, the university shall submit to the State Board of
377 Education such information as required by the board in the manner



378 indicated by the department on the academic performance
379 indicators.

380 (2) Within ninety (90) days of the conclusion
381 of the final scholastic year of the pilot program, the department
382 shall conduct a study and prepare a written report on the
383 effectiveness of the pilot program to raise student academic
384 performance and submit it to the Governor, the chairmen of the
385 Education Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives.

386 **SECTION 10.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
387 and after July 1, 2024.

