

By: Representative Roberson

To: Education

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 1431

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE
2 EFFICIENCY AND JOINDER TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE URGENT NEED OF
3 PROVIDING HOLISTIC EDUCATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND OPPORTUNITIES TO
4 SCHOOL DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI; TO PROVIDE
5 FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE TASK FORCE AND SPECIFY ITS PURPOSE AND
6 DUTIES; TO SPECIFY CERTAIN DATA THAT MUST BE COMPILED IN A REPORT
7 ON THE STUDY WHICH MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE LEGISLATURE BEFORE
8 DECEMBER 31, 2025; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

10 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is hereby created the School District
11 Administrative Efficiency and Joinder Task Force
12 to study the urgent need of providing holistic educational
13 efficiency and opportunities to school districts throughout the
14 State of Mississippi, with particular emphasis on evaluation and
15 assessments in those counties having two (2) or more school
16 districts situated therein and those school districts whose
17 boundaries are situated within two (2) counties, for the purpose
18 of determining how to substantially reduce the number of school
19 districts within the state.

20 (2) (a) The task force shall consist of the following
21 fifteen (15) members:



22 (i) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the House
23 Education Committee;

24 (ii) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Senate
25 Education Committee;

26 (iii) The Chairman of the House Accountability,
27 Efficiency, Transparency Committee;

28 (iv) The Chairman of the Senate Accountability,
29 Efficiency, Transparency Committee;

30 (v) The Chairman of the House State Affairs
31 Committee;

32 (vi) A member of the Mississippi Senate, appointed
33 by the Lieutenant Governor;

34 (vii) The State Superintendent of Public
35 Education, or his or her designee;

36 (viii) Three (3) members of the Standing
37 Commission on School District Efficiency, to be appointed by the
38 State Board Education, with one (1) being selected from each
39 Mississippi Supreme Court District;

40 (ix) The Commissioner of Higher Education, or his
41 or her appointee;

42 (x) The Executive Director of the Mississippi
43 Community College Board, or his or her appointee; and

44 (xi) The Commissioner of Revenue, or his or her
45 appointee.



46 (b) The Chairman of the House Education Committee and
47 the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee shall serve as co-
48 chairs of the task force, who shall jointly convene the first
49 meeting of the task force within twenty (20) days of the effective
50 date of this act, and at said meeting, shall elect any additional
51 officers from among its membership deemed necessary for the
52 efficient discharge of the task force's duties.

53 (3) The task force shall adopt rules and regulations
54 governing times and places for meetings and governing the manner
55 of conducting its business. A majority of the members shall
56 constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting any business of
57 the task force, and a majority vote of all members present shall
58 be required for any recommendations to the Legislature.

59 (4) (a) Using existing staff of the State Department of
60 Education, the task force shall compile the most recent data
61 available which reflects the following:

62 (i) The total public school student population for
63 the entire State of Mississippi;

64 (ii) The total number of students enrolled in the
65 public school system in each county;

66 (iii) The names of each school district situated
67 within each county, the total number of students enrolled in those
68 school districts and the net enrollment of students in those
69 school districts;



70 (iv) The total and per pupil administrative costs
71 of each school district, using the same funds, functions and
72 objects that the department is required to use under Section
73 37-151-203(1)(d) in the annual determination of the base student
74 cost under the Mississippi Student Funding Formula;

75 (v) The density classifications of each school
76 district required under Section 3-151-85 for purposes of
77 determining the district's transportation costs using the scale of
78 allowable costs developed by the department;

79 (vi) The total number of sparsely populated
80 districts, as defined under Section 37-151-201, in the state;

81 (vii) The accreditation level of each school
82 district; and

83 (viii) Such other objective information that may
84 be deemed relevant by the task force in addressing the issue of
85 the holistic educational efficiency and opportunities of school
86 districts.

87 (b) The information gathered by the task force under
88 this subsection shall be compiled and presented, by county, in a
89 user friendly format that easily allows for comparisons to be made
90 between school districts under each category of information.

91 (5) In addition to the data compiled under subsection (1) of
92 this section, the task force shall include the following
93 information:



94 (a) An in-depth analysis of all matters that must be
95 considered in determining whether or not reducing the number of
96 school districts in the state would be feasible or advantageous;

97 (b) A list of the benefits and disadvantages of
98 reducing or not reducing the number of school districts in each
99 specific county having two (2) or more school districts;

100 (c) A projection of the most feasible minimum size of a
101 school district which is capable of promoting a wholesome
102 educational experience, complete with advanced placement courses,
103 athletics and other extracurricular activities;

104 (d) A projection of the savings in state and local
105 funding which would be achieved through the consolidation of
106 school districts in each specific county having two (2) or more
107 school districts; and

108 (e) A recommended procedure to accomplish the
109 consolidation of school districts in each specific county having
110 two (2) or more school districts and a reasonable time frame in
111 which the consolidation could be achieved.

112 (6) In order to quantify and affirm the number of school
113 districts necessary within the state, if determined that single
114 county school districts are not in the best interest of the
115 children and families of this state, the department shall use the
116 following criterion:

117 (a) An assessment of the largest school districts in
118 the state;



119 (b) An assessment of the smallest school districts in
120 the state;

121 (c) An assessment of previously consolidated school
122 districts in counties having two (2) or more districts;

123 (d) An assessment of school districts whose boundaries
124 are situated within two (2) counties;

125 (e) The administrative, operational and programs of
126 instruction and curriculum of those schools accredited at the
127 highest and lowest levels of performance on the accreditation
128 rating scale;

129 (f) The socio-economic demographics of each district
130 with greater populations of at-risk students; and

131 (g) Levels of social, economic, academic and cultural
132 exposure.

133 (7) The task force shall cause the State Department of
134 Education to prepare a written report on the study which includes,
135 at a minimum, the data and information specified under subsections
136 (4), (5) and (6) of this section. The report must be presented to
137 the Legislature and the Governor before December 31, 2025.

138 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
139 and after its passage.

