

By: Representatives Lamar, Hawkins

To: Universities and
Colleges

HOUSE BILL NO. 1284

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONSOLIDATION OF
2 CERTAIN COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICTS, EFFECTIVE JULY 1,
3 2027, THEREBY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGE
4 DISTRICTS FROM 15 TO TWELVE 12; TO REQUIRE THE CONSOLIDATION OF
5 THE COAHOMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT INTO THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA
6 COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT, WITH COAHOMA OPERATING AS THE "COAHOMA
7 CAMPUS" OF MISSISSIPPI DELTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND WITH THE
8 CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES TO BE LOCATED IN CLARKSDALE,
9 MISSISSIPPI; TO REQUIRE THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE MERIDIAN
10 COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT INTO THE EAST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY
11 COLLEGE DISTRICT, WITH MERIDIAN TO OPERATE AS THE "MERIDIAN
12 CAMPUS" OF EAST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND WITH THE CENTRAL
13 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES TO BE LOCATED IN SCOоба, MISSISSIPPI; TO
14 REQUIRE THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE SOUTHWEST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY
15 COLLEGE DISTRICT INTO THE COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
16 DISTRICT, WITH SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAMPUS TO OPERATE AS
17 THE "SUMMIT CAMPUS" OF COPIAH-LINCOLN COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND WITH
18 THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES TO BE LOCATED IN WESSON,
19 MISSISSIPPI; TO PROVIDE FOR SUCCESSOR BOARDS OF TRUSTEES FOR EACH
20 CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT, INCLUDING THE COMPOSITION, APPOINTING
21 AUTHORITIES, INITIAL STAGGERED TERMS, SUCCESSOR TERMS,
22 QUALIFICATIONS AND FILLING OF VACANCIES; TO REQUIRE THE
23 MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD TO PROVIDE NOTICE AND
24 INSTRUCTIONS TO AFFECTED DISTRICTS ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 2026,
25 AND TO ADMINISTRATIVELY CONSOLIDATE ANY DISTRICT THAT FAILS TO
26 VOLUNTARILY COMPLY BY JULY 1, 2027; TO PROVIDE FOR THE ABOLITION
27 OF FORMER BOARDS OF TRUSTEES AND THE TRANSFER OF ALL REAL AND
28 PERSONAL PROPERTY TO THE SUCCESSOR CONSOLIDATED DISTRICTS; TO
29 AUTHORIZE THE SUCCESSOR BOARDS TO EMPLOY PERSONNEL AND ESTABLISH
30 CONTRACTS FOR THE 2027-2028 SCHOOL YEAR AND THEREAFTER AND TO
31 PREPARE AND APPROVE DISTRICT BUDGETS; TO PROVIDE LIMITED APPEAL
32 RIGHTS FROM CERTAIN SUCCESSOR BOARD ORDERS IN THE SAME MANNER AS
33 APPEALS FROM COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS UNDER SECTION 11-51-75;
34 TO PROVIDE THAT NO COLLEGE OR FACILITY SHALL BE REQUIRED TO CLOSE



EXCEPT UNNEEDED ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES IN ABOLISHED DISTRICTS; TO AUTHORIZE RULES AND REGULATIONS BY THE MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD TO IMPLEMENT THE CONSOLIDATION; TO AMEND SECTIONS 37-29-31, 37-29-65, 37-29-451, 37-29-453, 37-29-455, 37-29-457, 37-29-459, 37-29-461, 37-29-463, 37-29-465, 37-29-467, 37-29-469, 37-29-471, 37-29-501, 37-29-503, 37-29-505, 37-29-507, 37-29-509, 37-29-511, 37-29-513, 37-29-515, 37-29-551, 37-29-553, 37-29-555, 37-29-557, 37-29-559, 37-29-561, 37-29-563, 37-29-565, 37-29-567, 37-29-569 AND 37-29-571, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, IN CONFORMITY TO THE PRECEDING PROVISIONS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) In the State of Mississippi, in which are located, as of January 1, 2026, fifteen (15) community and junior college districts, there shall be an administrative consolidation of six (6) of those districts, effectively reducing the number to twelve (12) such districts, which are further identified and enumerated, accordingly in subsection (2) of this section and Section 37-29-31.

(2) For purposes of this act the consolidation shall impact the following community college districts, with regard to the composition of boards of trustees, administrative leadership and the transfers of duties, responsibilities and property. Effective on July 1, 2027:

(a) The Mississippi Delta Community College District shall be consolidated with the Coahoma Community College District, and shall officially be known as the Mississippi Delta Community College District. The central administrative offices shall be located in Clarksdale, Mississippi, and the college's administrative leadership shall consist of those officers serving in said capacities for Coahoma Community College as that district



65 existed on July 1, 2026. At that time, Coahoma Community College
66 shall be known as the Coahoma Campus of Mississippi Delta
67 Community College. The board of trustees for the newly
68 consolidated Mississippi Delta Community College District shall
69 consist of seventeen (17) members, with two (2) members appointed
70 by the county board of supervisors of each county comprising the
71 district as prescribed in Section 37-29-31, and one (1) member
72 appointed by the members of the board of trustees. Once
73 appointed, the new board of trustees shall determine the initial
74 terms of office for each member ranging from (1) to five (5)
75 years. Thereafter, all members shall be appointed for a
76 designated term of five (5) years in order to prevent the term
77 expiration of more than one (1) member of any one (1) county in
78 any one (1) year. The members appointed by the county boards of
79 supervisors shall be appointed in accordance with the
80 qualifications established in Section 37-29-65(6). The member
81 appointed by the board of trustees shall alternate terms between
82 Bolivar, Coahoma and Washington Counties, The first
83 board-appointed member shall be appointed from Coahoma County, and
84 succeeded by an appointee from Washington and then Bolivar
85 Counties;

86 (b) The East Mississippi Community College District
87 shall be consolidated with the Meridian Community College
88 District, and shall officially be known as the East Mississippi
89 Community College District. The central administrative offices



90 shall be located in Scooba, Mississippi, and the college's
91 administrative leadership shall consist of those officers serving
92 in said capacities for East Mississippi Community College as that
93 district existed on July 1, 2026. At that time, Meridian
94 Community College shall be known as the Meridian Campus of East
95 Mississippi Community College. The board of trustees for the
96 newly consolidated East Mississippi Community College District
97 shall consist of fourteen (14) members, comprised of the two (2)
98 members appointed by the county board of supervisors of each
99 county comprising the district as prescribed in Section 37-29-31
100 and serving on June 1, 2026, each of whom shall continue to serve
101 until the natural expiration of their appointment term, and two
102 (2) members appointed by the City Council of the City of Meridian,
103 whose terms of office shall begin on July 1, 2027. Once
104 appointed, the board shall determine the initial terms of office
105 for each member appointed by the City Council of the City of
106 Meridian as two (2) or four (4) years. Thereafter, all members
107 shall be appointed for a designated term of five (5) years in
108 order to prevent the term expiration of more than one (1) member
109 of any one (1) county in any one (1) year. Members appointed by
110 the city council and the county boards of supervisors shall be
111 appointed in accordance with the qualifications established in
112 Section 37-29-65(6); and

113 (c) The Copiah-Lincoln Community College District shall
114 be consolidated with the Southwest Mississippi Community College



115 District, and shall officially be known as the Copiah-Lincoln
116 Community College District. The central administrative offices
117 shall be located in Wesson, Mississippi, and the college's
118 administrative leadership shall consist of those officers serving
119 in said capacities for Copiah-Lincoln Community College as that
120 district existed on July 1, 2026. At that time, Southwest
121 Community College shall be known as the Summit Campus of
122 Copiah-Lincoln Community College. The board of trustees for the
123 newly consolidated Copiah-Lincoln Community College District shall
124 consist of twenty-seven (27) members, with three (3) members
125 appointed by each of the county board of supervisors for Adams,
126 Copiah, Lincoln, Pike and Simpson Counties, and two (2) members
127 appointed by each of the county board of supervisors for Amite,
128 Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence, Walthall and Wilkinson, whose terms
129 of office shall begin on July 1, 2027. Once appointed, those
130 counties having three (3) members, the board shall determine the
131 initial terms of office for each member as one (1), three (3) or
132 five (5) years. Once appointed, those counties having two (2)
133 members, the board shall determine the initial terms of office for
134 each member as two (2) or four (4) years. Thereafter, all members
135 shall be appointed for a designated term of five (5) years.
136 Members shall be appointed in accordance with the qualifications
137 established in Section 37-29-65(6).



(d) All vacancies shall be filled for unexpired terms by appointment by a majority vote of the original appointing governing authority.

(3) (a) On or before December 31, 2026, the Mississippi Community College Board shall serve the boards of trustees of each community college district scheduled for consolidation with notice and instructions regarding the timetable for action to be taken to comply with the administrative consolidation required in this section. The Mississippi Community College Board shall provide for the administrative consolidation of those community college districts identified in subsection (2) of this section on or before July 1, 2027. The Mississippi Community College Board shall declare that the territory embraced by counties forming each consolidated community college district shall be the boundary lines for the territory of those and shall spread a legal description of the new community college districts on the minutes of its January 2027 meeting and shall serve the applicable county boards of supervisors with an adequate legal description of these new boundaries.

(b) It shall be the responsibility of the board of supervisors of each county within a specific community college district to provide for the financial support of the community college district to which it is assigned. The board of supervisors of the county shall thereafter publish the same in some newspaper of general circulation in the county for at least



three (3) consecutive weeks and after having given notice of publication.

(c) Any community college district affected by the required administrative consolidation in the community college districts identified in subsection (2) of this section that does not voluntarily consolidate as ordered by the Mississippi Community College Board shall be administratively consolidated by the Mississippi Community College Board, to be effective on July 1, 2027. The Mississippi Community College Board shall promptly move on its own motion to administratively consolidate a community college district which does not voluntarily consolidate in order to enable the affected community college districts to reasonably accomplish the resulting administrative consolidation by July 1, 2027. The affected community college districts shall comply with any consolidation order issued by the Mississippi Community College Board on or before July 1, 2027.

(4) (a) On July 1, 2027, following the consolidation of the community college districts identified in subsection (2) of this section, the former boards of trustees of those community college districts shall be abolished. All real and personal property which is owned or titled in the name of the community college district located in such former community college districts shall be transferred to the new community college district to which it has been consolidated.



187 (b) The new boards of trustees of the consolidated
188 community college districts shall be responsible for establishing
189 the contracts for administrators, instructors, clerical and
190 administrative staff personnel for the 2027-2028 school year and
191 each school year thereafter.

192 (c) The presidents of the colleges with each community
193 college district may recommend for employment, with approval by
194 the boards of trustees, vice presidents of colleges and campuses
195 for the district, and shall employ as many such individuals to
196 administer the daily operations of such colleges and campuses. It
197 shall be the responsibility of the successor board of trustees to
198 prepare and approve the budget of the new consolidated community
199 college district, and the successor board of trustees may use
200 staff from the former community college district with which it has
201 been consolidated to prepare the budget. Any proposed order of
202 the Mississippi Community College Board directing the transfer of
203 the assets, real or personal property of an affected community
204 college district in the county, shall be final and conclusive for
205 the purposes of the transfer of property required by such
206 administrative consolidation.

207 (d) Any person or community college district aggrieved
208 by an order of the successor newly selected board of trustees of
209 the Copiah County Community college district pursuant to the
210 required administrative consolidation may appeal therefrom within
211 ten (10) days from the date of the adjournment of the meeting at



212 which such order is entered. The appeal shall be taken in the
213 same manner as appeals are taken from judgments or decisions of
214 the board of supervisors as provided in Section 11-51-75, the
215 provisions of which shall be fully applicable to appeals taken
216 hereunder. The board of trustees of the newly community college
217 district against whom the grievance is made shall not pass upon or
218 approve or disapprove any such order until the time for an appeal
219 therefrom has expired, nor shall the board pass upon or approve or
220 disapprove any such order from which an appeal is taken until said
221 appeal has been finally determined.

222 (5) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require
223 the closing of any college or facility, unless the facility is an
224 unneeded administrative office located within a community college
225 district which has been abolished under the provisions of this
226 section. The Mississippi Community College Board shall promulgate
227 rules and regulations to facilitate the administrative
228 consolidation of the community college districts pursuant to this
229 section.

230 **SECTION 2.** Section 37-29-31, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
231 amended as follows:

232 37-29-31. (1) There are hereby created the following
233 community or junior college districts comprising the entire
234 counties therein named and having boundaries coinciding with the
235 external boundaries thereof, each of which shall be separate
236 juristic entities and bodies politic and corporate:



(a) East Central * * * Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Leake, Neshoba, Newton, Scott and Winston.

(b) East Mississippi * * * Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Clay, Kemper, Lauderdale, Lowndes, Noxubee and Oktibbeha.

(c) Hinds * * * Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Hinds, Rankin, Warren and Claiborne.

(d) Holmes * * * Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Attala, Carroll, Choctaw, Grenada, Holmes, Madison, Montgomery, Webster and Yazoo.

(e) Itawamba * * * Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Chickasaw, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe and Pontotoc.

(f) Jones County Junior College District shall be comprised of the counties of Clarke, Covington, Greene, Jasper, Jones, Perry, Smith and Wayne.

(g) * * * Coahoma Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Bolivar, Coahoma, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Sunflower and Washington.

(h) Northeast * * * Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Alcorn, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo and Union.

(i) Northwest * * * Community College District shall be comprised of the counties of Benton, Calhoun, DeSoto, Lafayette,



Marshall, Panola, Quitman, Tallahatchie, Tate, Tunica and
Yalobusha.

(j) Pearl River Junior College District shall be
comprised of the counties of Forrest, Hancock, Jefferson Davis,
Lamar, Marion and Pearl River.

(k) * * * Copiah-Lincoln College District shall be
comprised of the counties of Adams, Amite, Copiah, Franklin,
Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Pike, Simpson, Walthall and
Wilkinson.

(j) Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College shall be
comprised of the counties of George, Harrison, Jackson and Stone.

(2) The boards of supervisor of each county belonging to a
community college district, shall only provide the amount of any
millage levied for the support and maintenance of the community
college district to which the county is assigned such county under
Section 37-29-141. No county shall contribute to more than one
(1) community college district.

SECTION 3. Section 37-29-65, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
amended as follows:

37-29-65. (1) Except as provided in this section and in
Sections 37-29-409, 37-29-457 and 37-29-505, there shall be five
(5) trustees from each county of the community/junior college
district which originally entered into and gave financial aid in
establishing the community/junior college. On June 30, 1992, the
offices of the six (6) trustees from each of the original counties



in the Northwest Community College District shall stand vacated. The board of supervisors of those respective counties shall appoint two (2) members on July 1, 1992, to serve full terms of office as provided in this section. The board of supervisors of those respective counties shall appoint one (1) member who is a qualified elector from each supervisors district to serve as a member, either of which may be the county superintendent of education if he or she resides in a respective supervisors district. Counties which subsequent to the establishment of the community/junior college joined the district shall have only one (1) trustee. However, the board of trustees so constituted, by appropriate resolution, may enlarge its number to six (6) trustees from each county. The board of trustees shall also be authorized within its discretion to reduce its number to two (2) trustees at large from each county. In any case in which there is an equal number of trustees the board of trustees may appoint another person to membership.

(2) The county superintendent, if appointed by the county board of supervisors, may, in his discretion, choose not to serve as a member of such board of trustees. Such decision not to serve shall be in writing and entered on the minutes of the board of trustees of the community/junior college district. The county board of supervisors of any county whose county superintendent of education appointed under the authority of this section, declines the appointment or resigns, pursuant to this subsection (2), shall



fill the vacancy caused by such resignation by appointing a member who is a qualified elector of the county at large in accordance with subsection (6) of this section. No county superintendent whose community college district is located within the East Mississippi Community College District shall serve on the board of trustees for that community college district.

(3) From and after * * * July 1, 2027, the Board of Trustees of the East Mississippi Community College District shall consist of * * * fourteen (14) members. The appointing authorities shall appoint a new board of trustees as follows: Clay County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Kemper County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Lauderdale County shall be entitled to * * * four (4) members, two of whom shall be residents of the incorporated limits of the City of Meridian appointed by the city council, Lowndes County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Noxubee County shall be entitled to two (2) members and Oktibbeha County shall be entitled to two (2) members. * * * Members of the Board of Trustees of the East Mississippi Community College District * * * on the board on July 1, 2026, shall continue to serve until the natural expiration of their appointment term. The two (2) additional appointees from Lauderdale County, representing the incorporated limits of the City of Meridian shall be appointed for a term of five (5) years.

(4) * * * From and after July 1, 2027, the Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Delta Community College District shall consist



of seventeen (17) members. The appointing authorities shall appoint a new board of trustees as follows: Bolivar County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Coahoma County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Humphreys County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Issaquena County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Leflore County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Sharkey County shall be entitled to two (2) members, Sunflower County shall be entitled to two (2) members and Washington County shall be entitled to two (2) members. The newly appointed board of trustees of the Mississippi Delta Community College District shall appoint one (1) member on an alternating basis from Bolivar, Coahoma and Washington Counties for a term of five (5) years. The first alternating appointee shall be from Coahoma County, and succeeded by an appointee from Washington and then Bolivar Counties.

(5) Except as otherwise provided in Section 1, the terms of office shall be five (5) years * * *. Where the board chooses or is required by statute to reduce its number, the board shall specify the expiration dates of such terms of office in order to prevent the retirement of more than one (1) member of any one (1) county in any one (1) year.

(6) The board of supervisors shall elect the requisite number of discreet persons of good moral character, sufficient education and experience, and of proven interest in public education, who are qualified electors of the county, as trustees



of the community/junior college; and annually thereafter the board of supervisors in like manner shall fill vacancies. All trustees so appointed shall be listed in the minutes of the board of supervisors and their appointment shall be certified by the chancery clerk to the president of the community/junior college.

(7) Each community/junior college trustee may be paid, out of community/junior college funds, a per diem as authorized in Section 25-3-69, * * * per meeting of said board and, in addition thereto, the mileage authorized under Section 25-3-41, * * * per mile in coming to and returning from said meeting, calculated upon the customary and normally traveled route from the home of such trustee to the campus of said community/junior college. Such allowance of per diem and mileage shall not, however, be allowed for more than fifteen (15) meetings for any one (1) fiscal year and shall only be paid for meetings actually attended by such trustees.

(8) The provisions of this section, other than those provisions pertaining to per diem compensation and travel allowances for community/junior college trustees, shall not apply to any existing publicly operated community/junior college, lying in and operated by a county bordering on the Mississippi River, and the community/junior college trustees of such community/junior college shall be appointed and confirmed as heretofore.

(9) No county superintendent of education, by virtue of his or her office, shall be automatically placed on the board of



387 trustees for any community/junior college district to which this
388 section applies. * * * However, if the county board of
389 supervisors, in making an appointment to the community/junior
390 college district board of trustees, chooses to appoint the county
391 superintendent of education at the expiration of the term of * * *
392 a member, the superintendent may serve, unless otherwise
393 disqualified.

394 **SECTION 4.** Section 37-29-451, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
395 amended as follows:

396 37-29-451. There is hereby created the Copiah-Lincoln * * *
397 Community College District comprised of the territory lying within
398 Adams, Amite, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Lawrence,
399 Lincoln * * *, Pike, Simpson, Walthall and Wilkinson Counties and
400 having boundaries coinciding with the external boundaries thereof.
401 The said district shall be and is hereby constituted a legal
402 political governmental subdivision and a body corporate. The
403 board of trustees of said district, with the consent of the
404 Mississippi Community College Board, is hereby empowered to change
405 the name of the district.

406 **SECTION 5.** Section 37-29-453, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
407 amended as follows:

408 37-29-453. The Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College
409 District shall be under the executive direction of a president
410 elected by the board of trustees of said district for a term not
411 to exceed four (4) years.



412 **SECTION 6.** Section 37-29-455, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
413 amended as follows:

414 37-29-455. The president of the * * * community college
415 shall have the power to recommend to the trustees all teachers to
416 be employed; and he may remove or suspend any member of the
417 faculty subject to the approval of the trustees. He shall be the
418 general manager of all fiscal and administrative affairs of the
419 district with full authority to select, direct, employ and
420 discharge any and all employees other than teachers; however, the
421 board may make provisions and establish policies for leave for
422 faculty members and other key personnel.

423 The president shall have the authority, subject to the
424 provisions of Sections 37-29-451 through 37-29-471 and the
425 approval of the trustees, to arrange and survey courses of study,
426 fix schedules, and establish and enforce rules and discipline for
427 the governing of teachers and students. He shall be the general
428 custodian of the property of the district.

429 **SECTION 7.** Section 37-29-457, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
430 amended as follows:

431 37-29-457. (1) From and after July 1, 2027, when the
432 consolidation of the Southwest Community College District into the
433 Copiah-Lincoln Community College District is effectuated as
434 required under Section 1 of this act, the operation and control of
435 the Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College District shall be
436 vested in a board of trustees representing the * * * eleven (11)



counties lying within the district. The said board shall consist of * * * twenty-seven (27) members to be chosen as follows:

(a) Copiah County shall be entitled to * * * three (3) members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2) of this act and the required qualifications of Section 37-29-65(6) * * *;

(b) Lincoln County shall be entitled to * * * three (3) members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2) of this act and the required qualification of Section 37-29-65(6) * * *;

(c) Lawrence County shall be entitled to * * * two (2) members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2) of this act and the required qualifications of Section 37-29-65(6) * * *;

(d) Franklin County shall be entitled to * * * two (2) members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2) of this act and the required qualifications of Section 37-29-65(6) * * *;

(e) Simpson County shall be entitled to * * * three (3) members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2) of this act and the required qualifications of Section 37-29-65(6) * * *;

(f) Jefferson County shall be entitled to * * * two (2) members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2)



of this act and the required qualifications of Section

37-29-65(6) * * *;

(g) Adams County shall be entitled to * * * three (3)
members who shall be elected * * * and serve according to Section
1(2) of this act and the required qualifications of Section
37-29-65(6);

(h) Amite County shall be entitled to two (2) members
who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2) of this
act and the required qualifications of Section 37-29-65(6);

(i) Pike County shall be entitled to three (3) members
who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2) of this
act and the required qualifications of Section 37-29-65(6);

(j) Walthall County shall be entitled to two (2)
members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2)
of this act and the required qualifications of Section
37-29-65(6); and

(k) Wilkinson County shall be entitled to two (2)
members who shall be elected and serve according to Section 1(2)
of this act and the required qualifications of Section
37-29-65(6).

* * *As prescribed in Section 1 of this act, once appointed
from those counties having three (3) members, the board shall
determine the initial terms of office for each member as one (1),
three (3) or five (5) years. Once appointed, those counties
having two (2) members, the board shall determine the initial



terms of office for each member as two (2) or four (4) years.

Thereafter, all members shall be appointed for a designated term of five (5) years. Members shall be appointed in accordance with the qualifications established in Section 37-29-65(6).

* * *

(2) * * * As prescribed in Section 1 of this act, once appointed from those counties having three (3) members, the board shall determine the initial terms of office for each member as one (1), three (3) or five (5) years. Once appointed, those counties having two (2) members, the board shall determine the initial terms of office for each member as two (2) or four (4) years. Thereafter, all members shall be appointed for a designated term of five (5) years. Members shall be appointed in accordance with the qualifications established in Section 37-29-65(6).

SECTION 8. Section 37-29-459, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-459. The President and the Board of Trustees of the Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College District shall have the powers to do all things necessary for the successful operation of said district and the campuses located therein.

The several colleges of the district shall be under the direction of the board of trustees and the president. The board of trustees shall, by resolution or order, provide for the government, maintenance and operation of each campus of the district.



511 The President and the Board of Trustees of the
512 Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College District shall have the
513 same powers as the presidents and trustees of other
514 community/junior colleges in the State of Mississippi.

515 The delineation and enumeration of the powers and purposes
516 set out in Sections 37-29-451 through 37-29-471 shall be deemed to
517 be supplemental and additional and shall not be construed to
518 restrict the powers of the governing authorities of the district
519 or of any college or campus located therein so as to deny any of
520 the rights, privileges and powers enjoyed by other
521 community/junior colleges and community/junior college districts
522 in the State of Mississippi.

523 The said Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College District
524 shall remain subject to the jurisdiction and control of the
525 Mississippi Community College Board as now established or as the
526 same may be hereafter changed by law, and shall be subject to all
527 rules and regulations and all statutory limitations which are now
528 in effect or may hereafter be imposed, except as the same may be
529 in direct conflict with the provisions of Sections 37-29-451
530 through 37-29-471.

531 **SECTION 9.** Section 37-29-461, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
532 amended as follows:

533 37-29-461. There shall be * * * four (4) campuses in the
534 Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College District:



(a) One (1) located in or near Natchez to be known as the Natchez Campus * * *;

(b) One (1) to located in or near Wesson to be known as the Copiah-Lincoln Campus;

(c) One (1) located in or near Mendenhall to be known as the Simpson County Center; and

(d) One (1) located in or near Summit to be known as the Summit Campus.

SECTION 10. Section 37-29-463, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-463. From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Southwest Community College District into the Copiah-Lincoln Community College District is effectuated as required under Section 1 of this act, the board of trustees of the Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College District shall each year, on or before June 15, prepare a budget which shall contain a detailed estimate of the revenues and expenses anticipated for the ensuing year for general operation and maintenance, and shall set forth the reasonable requirements for anticipated needs for capital outlays for land, buildings, initial equipment for new buildings and major repairs, a reasonable accumulation for such purposes being hereby expressly authorized.

SECTION 11. Section 37-29-465, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:



559 37-29-465. The board of trustees of the Copiah-Lincoln * * *
560 Community College District shall have the authority to purchase
561 property, make capital improvements, and lease or use private or
562 public facilities at either the Copiah-Lincoln, Summit or Natchez
563 Campuses or the Simpson County Center, in the discretion of the
564 board.

565 **SECTION 12.** Section 37-29-467, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
566 amended as follows:

567 37-29-467. The Copiah-Lincoln * * * Community College
568 District is charged with the responsibility for providing
569 preprofessional courses, liberal arts, technical, vocational and
570 adult education courses, and shall undertake to provide the same
571 as conveniently as is possible to the residents of the district,
572 and to this end the board of trustees is authorized and empowered
573 to transport such students as, in its discretion, should be
574 transported in the best interest of the district.

575 **SECTION 13.** Section 37-29-469, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
576 amended as follows:

577 37-29-469. The board of trustees of the Copiah-Lincoln * * *
578 Community College District shall have the general borrowing and
579 bonding authority provided in Sections 37-29-101 through
580 37-29-127. The said board of trustees shall have the taxation
581 authority provided in Sections 37-29-141 through 37-29-145.

582 **SECTION 14.** Section 37-29-471, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
583 amended as follows:



37-29-471. All of the property belonging to the board of trustees of Covich-Lincoln * * * Community College and all of the property belonging to any or all of the counties, prior to and as of the effective date hereof, cooperating in the Covich-Lincoln * * * Community College or the agricultural high school * * * community college located at Wesson, Mississippi, or the campus in Adams County, Mississippi, and utilized or held for the present or future use and benefit of said * * * community college and/or agricultural high school * * * community college, shall be and the same is hereby transferred to and vested in the Covich-Lincoln * * * Community College District as created by Sections 37-29-451 through 37-29-471.

SECTION 15. Section 37-29-501, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-501. (1) There is hereby created a community/junior college district comprised of the territory lying within the Meridian Municipal Separate Community college district and having boundaries coinciding with the external boundaries thereof. The name of the said community/junior college district shall be the Meridian * * * Community College District and the said district shall be and the same is hereby constituted a legal political governmental subdivision and a body corporate.

(2) From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Meridian Community College District into the East Mississippi Community College District is effectuated as required under



Section 1 of this act, the Meridian Community College District shall be dissolved, and this section shall stand repealed.

SECTION 16. Section 37-29-503, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-503. From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Meridian Community College District into the East Mississippi Community College District is effectuated as required under Section 1 of this act, all of the property owned by the Meridian Municipal Separate Community college district utilized by Meridian * * * Community College as of September 1, 1979, shall be and the same is hereby transferred to and vested in the board of trustees of the * * * East Central Community College District and their successors in office for the use and benefit of the Meridian Campus of East Mississippi Community College.

SECTION 17. Section 37-29-505, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-505. From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Meridian Community College District into the East Mississippi Community College District is effectuated as required under Section 1 of this act, the control and operation of the Meridian * * * Community College District shall be vested in * * * the board of trustees * * * of the East Mississippi Community College District. The board of trustees of the Meridian * * * Community College District * * * shall be dissolved on June 30, 2027, and two (2) new members appointed by the City



Council of the City of Meridian shall begin their terms of service
on the board of trustees for the East Mississippi Community
College District on July 1, 2027, in accordance with the terms
prescribed in Section 1(2) of this act, and thereafter all
appointments for representation on the East Mississippi Community
College District Board of Trustees shall be for a term of five (5)
years. Trustees * * * shall be appointed by a majority vote of
the full membership of the city council of the City of Meridian at
the first meeting of the council held in the month of * * * June
of each year, and the term of office of each trustee so appointed
shall commence on * * * July 1 immediately following * * *. All
vacancies shall be filled for unexpired terms by appointment by
majority vote of the full membership of the city council.

SECTION 18. Section 37-29-507, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
amended as follows:

37-29-507. (1) The Board of Trustees of the Meridian * * *
Community College District shall have the power to do all things
necessary for the successful operation of the district; and, the
duties of such board shall be the general government of the
district and the direction of the administration thereof.

(2) The Meridian * * * Community College District shall have
all the powers of other * * * community colleges and * * *
community college districts in the State of Mississippi; and, the
delineation and enumeration of the powers and purposes set out in
Sections 37-29-501 through 37-29-515 shall not be construed to



659 restrict the powers of the governing authorities of the district
660 so as to deny to the district any of the rights, privileges and
661 powers enjoyed by other * * * community colleges and * * *
662 community college districts in the State of Mississippi.

663 (3) The Meridian * * * Community College District shall
664 remain subject to the jurisdiction and control of the Mississippi
665 Community College Board as now established or as the same may be
666 hereafter changed by law and shall be subject to all rules and
667 regulations and all statutory limitations which are now in effect
668 or may hereafter be imposed, except as the same may be in direct
669 conflict with the provisions of Sections 37-29-501 through
670 37-29-515.

671 (4) From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of
672 the Meridian Community College District into the East Mississippi
673 Community College District is effectuated as required under
674 Section 1 of this act, the Meridian Community College District
675 shall be dissolved, and this section shall stand repealed.

676 **SECTION 19.** Section 37-29-509, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
677 amended as follows:

678 37-29-509. (1) The Meridian * * * Community College
679 District shall be under the executive direction of a president
680 elected by the board of trustees of such district.

681 (2) The president of the community college shall be general
682 manager of all fiscal and administrative affairs of the district
683 with full authority to select, employ, direct and discharge any



and all employees other than faculty. He shall have the power to recommend to the board of trustees all faculty to be employed, and he may remove or suspend any member of the faculty subject to the approval of the board of trustees. The president shall have the authority, subject to the approval of the board of trustees, to arrange and survey courses of study, fix schedules and establish and enforce rules and discipline for the governing of faculty and students. He shall be the general custodian of the property of the district.

(3) From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Meridian Community College District into the East Mississippi Community College District is effectuated as required under Section 1 of this act, the Meridian Community College District shall be dissolved, and this section shall stand repealed.

SECTION 20. Section 37-29-511, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-511. (1) The board of trustees of the Meridian * * * Community College District shall on or before the twenty-fifth day of June each year prepare and file the annual budget of the district. The budget shall contain a detailed estimate of the revenues and expenses anticipated for the ensuing year for general operation and maintenance and shall set forth reasonable requirements for anticipated needs for capital outlays for land, buildings, equipment and major repairs, a reasonable accumulation for such purposes being hereby expressly authorized. Funds



709 derived from the levy for capital outlay shall be kept in a
710 separate account and expended for capital outlay purposes only.

711 (2) From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of
712 the Meridian Community College District into the East Mississippi
713 Community College District is effectuated as required under
714 Section 1 of this act, the Meridian Community College District
715 shall be dissolved, the authority granted under subsection (1) of
716 this section shall be transferred to the board of trustees of the
717 East Mississippi Community College District.

718 **SECTION 21.** Section 37-29-513, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
719 amended as follows:

720 37-29-513. (1) After the annual budget has been prepared,
721 the Board of Trustees of the Meridian * * * Community College
722 District shall certify the same in writing to the City Council of
723 the City of Meridian and shall certify to the number of mills of
724 ad valorem taxation required to make provisions for the revenue
725 required in said budget. It shall thereupon become the duty of
726 the City of Meridian to levy taxes upon the Meridian * * *
727 Community College District in the amount specified by the board of
728 trustees. The tax levy for maintenance and operation of the
729 Meridian * * * Community College District shall not exceed three
730 (3) mills nor shall the levy for construction exceed an additional
731 three (3) mills.

732 (2) From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of
733 the Meridian Community College District into the East Mississippi



Community College District is effectuated as required under
Section 1 of this act, the Meridian Community College District
shall be dissolved, the authority granted under subsection (1) of
this section shall be transferred to the board of trustees of the
East Mississippi Community College District.

SECTION 22. Section 37-29-515, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
amended as follows:

37-29-515. On or before the thirtieth day of each month, the
city council of the City of Meridian shall transmit warrants
constituting all of the revenues received from taxation for the
prior month for purposes of support of the Meridian * * *
Community College District to the president of East Mississippi
Community College for the use and benefit of the Meridian * * *
Campus. Such warrant or warrants shall bear indication of
revenues received for general support and maintenance and revenues
received for capital outlay purposes. All such warrants
evidencing income from the authorized tax levies shall be
deposited forthwith in one (1) or more banking institutions and
public depositories previously selected by the board of trustees
of the Meridian * * * Community College District serving on June
30,2026, and spread upon its official minutes. Such funds shall
be paid out of the depository by order of the board of trustees
for the East Mississippi Community College District for lawful
purposes only.



SECTION 23. Section 37-29-551, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-551. There is hereby created the * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District comprised of the territory lying within Bolivar County, Coahoma County, * * * Humphreys County, Issaquena County, Leflore County, Sharkey County, Sunflower County and Washington County, and having boundaries coinciding with the external boundaries thereof. The district shall be, and is hereby constituted, a legal political governmental subdivision and a body corporate.

SECTION 24. Section 37-29-553, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-553. (1) The * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District shall be under the executive direction of a president elected by the board of trustees of the district for a term not to exceed four (4) years.

SECTION 25. Section 37-29-555, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-555. The president of the Mississippi Delta Community College district shall have the power to recommend to the trustees all teachers to be employed; and he may remove or suspend any member of the faculty subject to the approval of the trustees. He shall be the general manager of all fiscal and administrative affairs of the district with full authority to select, direct, employ and discharge any and all employees other than teachers;



however, the board may make provisions and establish policies for leave for faculty members and other key personnel.

(2) The president shall have the authority, subject to the provisions of Sections 37-29-551 through 37-29-569 and the approval of the trustees, to arrange and survey courses of study, fix schedules, and establish and enforce rules and discipline for the governing of teachers and students. He shall be the general custodian of the property of the district.

SECTION 26. Section 37-29-557, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-557. From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Coahoma Community College District into the Mississippi Delta Community College District is effectuated as required under Section 1 of this act, the operation and control of the * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District shall be vested in a board of trustees representing the counties lying within the district. The board shall consist of * * * seventeen (17) trustees selected in the manner provided in Section 1(2) of this act and Section 37-29-65(4) * * *.

SECTION 27. Section 37-29-559, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-559. (1) The President and the Board of Trustees of the * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District shall have the powers to do all things necessary for the successful operation of the district and the campuses located therein.



808 (2) The college of the district shall be under the direction
809 of the board of trustees and the president. The board of trustees
810 shall, by resolution or order, provide for the government,
811 maintenance and operation of * * * campuses of the district.

812 (3) The President and the Board of Trustees of the * * *
813 Mississippi Delta Community College District shall have the same
814 powers as the presidents and trustees of other community colleges
815 in the State of Mississippi.

816 (4) The delineation and enumeration of the powers and
817 purposes set out in Sections 37-29-551 through 37-29-569 shall be
818 deemed to be supplemental and additional and shall not be
819 construed to restrict the powers of the governing authorities of
820 the district or of any college or campus located therein so as to
821 deny any of the rights, privileges and powers enjoyed by other
822 community/junior colleges and community/junior college districts
823 in the State of Mississippi.

824 (5) The * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District
825 shall remain subject to the jurisdiction of the Mississippi
826 Community College Board as now established or as the same may be
827 hereafter changed by law, and shall be subject to all rules and
828 regulations and all statutory limitations which are now in effect
829 or may hereafter be imposed, except as the same may be in direct
830 conflict with the provisions of Sections 37-29-551 through
831 37-29-569.



SECTION 28. Section 37-29-561, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-561. From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Coahoma Community College District into the Mississippi Delta Community College District is effectuated as required under Section 1 of this act, the Board of Trustees of the * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District shall each year, on or before June 15, prepare a budget which shall contain a detailed estimate of the revenues and expenses anticipated for the ensuing year for general operation and maintenance, and shall set forth the reasonable requirements for anticipated needs for capital outlays for land, buildings, initial equipment for new buildings and major repairs, a reasonable accumulation for such purposes being hereby expressly authorized.

SECTION 29. Section 37-29-563, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-563. The Board of Trustees of the * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District shall have the authority to purchase property, make capital improvements, and lease or use private or public facilities at the campus, in the discretion of the board.

SECTION 30. Section 37-29-565, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-565. The * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District is charged with the responsibility for providing



preprofessional courses, liberal arts, technical, vocational and adult education courses, and shall undertake to provide the same as conveniently as is possible to the residents of the district, and to this end the board of trustees is authorized and empowered to transport such students as, in its discretion, should be transported in the best interest of the district.

SECTION 31. Section 37-29-567, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-567. The Board of Trustees of the * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District shall have the general borrowing and bonding authority provided in Sections 37-29-101 through 37-29-127. The board of trustees shall have the taxation authority provided in Sections 37-29-141 through 37-29-145.

SECTION 32. Section 37-29-569, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-29-569. All of the property located in Coahoma County and belonging to the Board of Trustees of Mississippi Delta Community College prior to and as of the effective date hereof, cooperating in the Coahoma County Community College, and utilized or held for the present or future use and benefit of such community college, shall be and the same is hereby transferred to and vested in the * * * Mississippi Delta Community College District as created by Sections 37-29-551 through 37-29-569.

SECTION 33. Section 37-29-571, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:



37-29-571. (1) All counties located within the Coahoma Community College District shall allocate fifty percent (50%) of any millage levied for the support and maintenance of community colleges by such county under Section 37-29-141, Mississippi Code of 1972, to the Coahoma Community College District and the remaining fifty percent (50%) of such millage to the other community college district in which such county is located. Provided, however, that Coahoma County shall allocate one hundred percent (100%) of the millage levied for the support and maintenance of community colleges to the Coahoma Community College District. Provided further, however, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1995, Tunica County's allocation of any millage shall be prorated with thirty-five percent (35%) being allocated to the Coahoma Community College District and the remaining sixty-five percent (65%) being allocated to the Northwest Community College District. From and after July 1, 1996, the Tunica County millage shall be divided equally between the Coahoma Community College District and the Northwest Community College District.

(2) From and after July 1, 2027, when the consolidation of the Coahoma Community College District into the Mississippi Delta Community College District is effectuated as required under Section 1 of this act, this section shall be repealed.

SECTION 34. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2026.

