By: Senator(s) DeBar, Hopson, Boyd, Barnett, Blackmon, Blackwell, Blount, Brumfield, Butler, Chism, DuPree, Fillingane, Frazier, Gillespie Isom, Harkins, Hickman, Jackson, Ladner, McCaughn, McLendon, McMahan, Michel, Mumford, Norwood, Pope, Simmons (12th), Simmons (13th), Sparks, Suber, Thomas, Wiggins

To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2001

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-19-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASE TO THE MINIMUM TEACHER SALARY SCALE; TO AMEND SECTION 37-21-7, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT NO SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL REDUCE THE LOCAL SUPPLEMENT OR PAY AN INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANT TEACHER LESS THAN THE STATE MINIMUM SALARY IN A YEAR IN WHICH THE STATE MINIMUM SALARY IS INCREASED; TO PROVIDE FOR A REDUCTION IN FUNDS FOR DISTRICTS THAT VIOLATE THIS SECTION; TO PROVIDE THAT NO DISTRICT SHALL PAY ANY ASSISTANT TEACHER LESS THAN THE STATE MINIMUM SALARY UNLESS DONE SO BY A PRO RATA DAILY AMOUNT WHERE THERE HAS BEEN A REDUCTION IN ADEQUATE EDUCATION PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS FOR SUCH DISTRICT IN SUCH YEAR OR IN THE AMOUNT OF FEDERAL FUNDS TO SUCH DISTRICT FROM THE PREVIOUS YEAR; TO PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASE TO THE MINIMUM BASE SALARY FOR ASSISTANT TEACHERS; TO EXPRESS THE LEGISLATURE'S INTENT THAT EACH FULL-TIME PROFESSOR OR INSTRUCTOR AT A STATE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING OR COMMUNITY OR JUNIOR COLLEGE RECEIVE A SALARY INCREASE ABOVE EXISTING PAY; TO EXPRESS THE INTENT OF THE LEGISLATURE THAT ALL FULL-TIME PROFESSORS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS, ASSISTANT PROFESSORS AND COURSE INSTRUCTORS OF ANY INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING OR COMMUNITY OR JUNIOR COLLEGE RECEIVE A SALARY INCREASE OF $2,000.00 ABOVE THEIR CURRENT SALARIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-19-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-19-7. (1) Teachers' salaries in each public school district shall be determined and paid in accordance with the scale for teachers' salaries as provided in this subsection. For

teachers holding the following types of licenses or the equivalent as determined by the State Board of Education, and the following number of years of teaching experience, the scale shall be as follows:

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2026-2027 AND SUBSEQUENT SCHOOL YEARS MINIMUM SALARY SCHEDULE

Exp.	AAAA	AAA	AA	A
0	47,500.00	46,000.00	45,000.00	43,500.00
1	48,100.00	46,550.00	45,525.00	43,900.00
2	48,700.00	47,100.00	46,050.00	44,300.00
3	49,300.00	47,650.00	46,575.00	44,700.00
4	49,900.00	48,200.00	47,100.00	45,100.00
5	51,250.00	49,500.00	48,350.00	46,300.00
6	51,850.00	50,050.00	48,875.00	46,700.00
7	52,450.00	50,600.00	49,400.00	47,100.00
8	53,050.00	51,150.00	49,925.00	47,500.00
9	53,650.00	51,700.00	50,450.00	47,900.00
10	55,000.00	53,000.00	51,700.00	49,100.00
11	55,600.00	53,550.00	52,225.00	49,500.00
12	56,200.00	54,100.00	52,750.00	49,900.00
13	56,800.00	54,650.00	53,275.00	50,300.00
14	57,400.00	55,200.00	53,800.00	50,700.00
15	58,750.00	56,500.00	55,050.00	51,900.00
16	59,350.00	57,050.00	55,575.00	52,300.00
17	59,950.00	57,600.00	56,100.00	52,700.00

18	60,550.00	58,150.00	56,625.00	53,100.00
19	61,150.00	58,700.00	57,150.00	53,500.00
20	62,500.00	60,000.00	58,400.00	54,700.00
21	63,100.00	60,550.00	58,925.00	55,100.00
22	63,700.00	61,100.00	59,450.00	55,500.00
23	64,300.00	61,650.00	59,975.00	55,900.00
24	64,900.00	62,200.00	60,500.00	56,300.00
25	67,400.00	64,700.00	63,000.00	58,800.00
26	68,000.00	65,250.00	63,525.00	59,200.00
27	68,600.00	65,800.00	64,050.00	59,600.00
28	69,200.00	66,350.00	64,575.00	60,000.00
29	69,800.00	66,900.00	65,100.00	60,400.00
30	70,400.00	67,450.00	65,625.00	60,800.00
31	71,000.00	68,000.00	66,150.00	61,200.00
32	71,600.00	68,550.00	66,675.00	61,600.00
33	72,200.00	69,100.00	67,200.00	62,000.00
34	72,800.00	69,650.00	67,725.00	62,400.00
35 & above	73,400.00	70,200.00	68,250.00	62,800.00

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The school district, with assistance from the Department of Education, shall consider the teacher's years of service and license type and determine the corresponding salary for the retired teacher. After determining the retired teacher's corresponding salary, the school district may allocate up to one

hundred twenty-five percent (125%) of the amount provided under the salary schedule for such teacher, as applicable, as salary and assessment under the program.

After determining the retired teacher's salary, the school district may pay no more than fifty percent (50%) of the retired teacher's compensation as salary to the retired teacher. The remaining fifty percent (50%) of the retired teacher's compensation as salary shall be paid by the school district to PERS as a pension liability participation assessment.

It is the intent of the Legislature that any state funds made available for salaries of licensed personnel in excess of the funds paid for such salaries for the 1986-1987 school year shall be paid to licensed personnel pursuant to a personnel appraisal and compensation system implemented by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall have the authority to adopt and amend rules and regulations as are necessary to establish, administer and maintain the system.

All teachers employed on a full-time basis shall be paid a minimum salary in accordance with the above scale. However, no school district shall receive any funds under this section for any school year during which the local supplement paid to any individual teacher shall have been reduced to a sum less than that paid to that individual teacher for performing the same duties from local supplement during the immediately preceding school year. The amount actually spent for the purposes of group health

and/or life insurance shall be considered as a part of the aggregate amount of local supplement but shall not be considered a part of the amount of individual local supplement.

The level of professional training of each teacher to be used in establishing the salary for the teacher for each year shall be determined by the type of valid teacher's license issued to that teacher on or before October 1 of the current school year. However, school districts are authorized, in their discretion, to negotiate the salary levels applicable to licensed employees who are receiving retirement benefits from the retirement system of another state.

(2) (a) The following employees shall receive an annual salary supplement in the amount of Six Thousand Dollars ($6,000.00), plus fringe benefits, in addition to any other compensation to which the employee may be entitled:

(i) Any licensed teacher or retired teacher employed by a school district under the authority of Section 25-11-126 who has met the requirements and acquired a Master Teacher certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who is employed by a local school board or the State Board of Education as a teacher and not as an administrator. Such teacher shall submit documentation to the State Department of Education that the certificate was received prior to October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the teacher shall submit

such documentation to the State Department of Education prior to February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year.

(ii) A licensed nurse who has met the requirements and acquired a certificate from the National Board for Certification of School Nurses, Inc., and who is employed by a local school board or the State Board of Education as a school nurse and not as an administrator. The licensed school nurse shall submit documentation to the State Department of Education that the certificate was received before October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the licensed school nurse shall submit the documentation to the State Department of Education before February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year.

(iii) Any licensed school counselor who has met the requirements and acquired a National Certified School Counselor (NCSC) endorsement from the National Board of Certified Counselors and who is employed by a local school board or the State Board of Education as a counselor and not as an administrator. Such licensed school counselor shall submit documentation to the State Department of Education that the endorsement was received prior to October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the licensed school counselor shall submit such

documentation to the State Department of Education prior to February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year. However, any school counselor who started the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards process for school counselors between June 1, 2003, and June 30, 2004, and completes the requirements and acquires the Master Teacher certificate shall be entitled to the master teacher supplement, and those counselors who complete the process shall be entitled to a one-time reimbursement for the actual cost of the process as outlined in paragraph (b) of this subsection.

(iv) Any licensed speech-language pathologist and audiologist who has met the requirements and acquired a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and any certified academic language therapist (CALT) who has met the certification requirements of the Academic Language Therapy Association and who is employed by a local school board. The licensed speech-language pathologist and audiologist and certified academic language therapist shall submit documentation to the State Department of Education that the certificate or endorsement was received before October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the licensed speech-language pathologist and audiologist and certified academic language therapist shall submit the documentation to the State Department

of Education before February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year.

(v) Any licensed athletic trainer who has met the requirements and acquired Board Certification for the Athletic Trainer from the Board of Certification, Inc., and who is employed by a local school board or the State Board of Education as an athletic trainer and not as an administrator. The licensed athletic trainer shall submit documentation to the State Department of Education that the certificate was received before October 15 in order to be eligible for the full salary supplement in the current school year, or the licensed athletic trainer shall submit the documentation to the State Department of Education before February 15 in order to be eligible for a prorated salary supplement beginning with the second term of the school year.

(b) An employee shall be reimbursed for the actual cost of completing each component of acquiring the certificate or endorsement, excluding any costs incurred for postgraduate courses, not to exceed Five Hundred Dollars ($500.00) for each component, not to exceed four (4) components, for a teacher, school counselor or speech-language pathologist and audiologist, regardless of whether or not the process resulted in the award of the certificate or endorsement. A local school district or any private individual or entity may pay the cost of completing the process of acquiring the certificate or endorsement for any

employee of the school district described under paragraph (a), and the State Department of Education shall reimburse the school district for such cost, regardless of whether or not the process resulted in the award of the certificate or endorsement. If a private individual or entity has paid the cost of completing the process of acquiring the certificate or endorsement for an employee, the local school district may agree to directly reimburse the individual or entity for such cost on behalf of the employee.

(c) All salary supplements, fringe benefits and process reimbursement authorized under this subsection shall be paid directly by the State Department of Education to the local school district and shall be in addition to its allotments from the total funding formula provided in Sections 37-151-200 through 37-151-215 and not a part thereof in accordance with regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education. Local school districts shall not reduce the local supplement paid to any employee receiving such salary supplement, and the employee shall receive any local supplement to which employees with similar training and experience otherwise are entitled. However, an educational employee shall receive the salary supplement in the amount of Six Thousand Dollars ($6,000.00) for only one (1) of the qualifying certifications authorized under paragraph (a) of this subsection. No school district shall provide more than one (1) annual salary supplement under the provisions of this subsection to any one (1)

individual employee holding multiple qualifying national certifications.

(d) If an employee for whom such cost has been paid, in full or in part, by a local school district or private individual or entity fails to complete the certification or endorsement process, the employee shall be liable to the school district or individual or entity for all amounts paid by the school district or individual or entity on behalf of that employee toward his or her certificate or endorsement.

(3) The following employees shall receive an annual salary supplement in the amount of Four Thousand Dollars ($4,000.00), plus fringe benefits, in addition to any other compensation to which the employee may be entitled:

Effective July 1, 2016, if funds are available for that purpose, any licensed teacher or retired teacher employed by a local school district under the authority of Section 25-11-126 who has met the requirements and acquired a Master Teacher Certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and who is employed in a public school district located in one (1) of the following counties: Claiborne, Adams, Jefferson, Wilkinson, Amite, Bolivar, Coahoma, Leflore, Quitman, Sharkey, Issaquena, Sunflower, Washington, Holmes, Yazoo and Tallahatchie. The salary supplement awarded under the provisions of this subsection (3) shall be in addition to the salary supplement awarded under the provisions of subsection (2) of this section.

Teachers who meet the qualifications for a salary supplement under this subsection (3) who are assigned for less than one (1) full year or less than full time for the school year shall receive the salary supplement in a prorated manner, with the portion of the teacher's assignment to the critical geographic area to be determined as of June 15th of the school year.

(4) (a) This subsection shall be known and may be cited as the "Mississippi Performance-Based Pay (MPBP)" plan. In addition to the minimum base pay described in this section, only if funds are available for that purpose, the State of Mississippi may provide monies from state funds to school districts for the purposes of rewarding licensed teachers, administrators and nonlicensed personnel at individual schools showing improvement in student test scores. The MPBP plan shall be developed by the State Department of Education based on the following criteria:

(i) It is the express intent of this legislation that the MPBP plan shall utilize only existing standards of accreditation and assessment as established by the State Board of Education.

(ii) To ensure that all of Mississippi's teachers, administrators and nonlicensed personnel at all schools have equal access to the monies set aside in this section, the MPBP program shall be designed to calculate each school's performance as determined by the school's increase in scores from the prior school year. The MPBP program shall be based on a standardized

scores rating where all levels of schools can be judged in a statistically fair and reasonable way upon implementation. At the end of each year, after all student achievement scores have been standardized, the State Department of Education shall implement the MPBP plan.

(iii) To ensure all teachers cooperate in the spirit of teamwork, individual schools shall submit a plan to the local school district to be approved before the beginning of each school year. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, how all teachers, regardless of subject area, and administrators will be responsible for improving student achievement for their individual school.

(b) The State Board of Education shall develop the processes and procedures for designating schools eligible to participate in the MPBP. State assessment results, growth in student achievement at individual schools and other measures deemed appropriate in designating successful student achievement shall be used in establishing MPBP criteria.

(5) (a) If funds are available for that purpose, each school in Mississippi shall have mentor teachers, as defined by Sections 37-9-201 through 37-9-213, who shall receive additional base compensation provided for by the State Legislature in the amount of One Thousand Dollars ($1,000.00) per each beginning teacher that is being mentored. The additional state compensation shall be limited to those mentor teachers that provide mentoring

services to beginning teachers. For the purposes of such funding, a beginning teacher shall be defined as any teacher in any school in Mississippi that has less than one (1) year of classroom experience teaching in a public school. For the purposes of such funding, no full-time academic teacher shall mentor more than two (2) beginning teachers.

(b) To be eligible for this state funding, the individual school must have a classroom management program approved by the local school board.

(6) Effective with the 2014-2015 school year, the school districts participating in the Pilot Performance-Based Compensation System pursuant to Section 37-19-9 may award additional teacher and administrator pay based thereon.

SECTION 2. Section 37-21-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-21-7. (1) This section shall be referred to as the "Mississippi Elementary Schools Assistant Teacher Program," the purpose of which shall be to provide an early childhood education program that assists in the instruction of basic skills. The State Board of Education is authorized, empowered and directed to implement a statewide system of assistant teachers in kindergarten classes and in the first, second and third grades. The assistant teacher shall assist pupils in actual instruction under the strict supervision of a licensed teacher.

(2) (a) Except as otherwise authorized under subsection (7), each school district shall employ the total number of assistant teachers funded under subsection (6) of this section. The superintendent of each district shall assign the assistant teachers to the kindergarten, first-, second- and third-grade classes in the district in a manner that will promote the maximum efficiency, as determined by the superintendent, in the instruction of skills such as verbal and linguistic skills, logical and mathematical skills, and social skills.

(b) If a licensed teacher to whom an assistant teacher has been assigned is required to be absent from the classroom, the assistant teacher may assume responsibility for the classroom in lieu of a substitute teacher. However, no assistant teacher shall assume sole responsibility of the classroom for more than three (3) consecutive school days. Further, in no event shall any assistant teacher be assigned to serve as a substitute teacher for any teacher other than the licensed teacher to whom that assistant teacher has been assigned.

(3) Assistant teachers shall have, at a minimum, a high school diploma or a High School Equivalency Diploma equivalent, and shall show demonstratable proficiency in reading and writing skills. The State Department of Education shall develop a testing procedure for assistant teacher applicants to be used in all school districts in the state.

(4) (a) In order to receive funding, each school district shall:

(i) Submit a plan on the implementation of a reading improvement program to the State Department of Education; and

(ii) Develop a plan of educational accountability and assessment of performance, including pretests and posttests, for reading in Grades 1 through 6.

(b) Additionally, each school district shall:

(i) Provide annually a mandatory preservice orientation session, using an existing in-school service day, for administrators and teachers on the effective use of assistant teachers as part of a team in the classroom setting and on the role of assistant teachers, with emphasis on program goals;

(ii) Hold periodic workshops for administrators and teachers on the effective use and supervision of assistant teachers;

(iii) Provide training annually on specific instructional skills for assistant teachers;

(iv) Annually evaluate their program in accordance with their educational accountability and assessment of performance plan; and

(v) Designate the necessary personnel to supervise and report on their program.

(5) The State Department of Education shall:

(a) Develop and assist in the implementation of a statewide uniform training module, subject to the availability of funds specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature, which shall be used in all school districts for training administrators, teachers and assistant teachers. The module shall provide for the consolidated training of each assistant teacher and teacher to whom the assistant teacher is assigned, working together as a team, and shall require further periodic training for administrators, teachers and assistant teachers regarding the role of assistant teachers;

(b) Annually evaluate the program on the district and state level. Subject to the availability of funds specifically appropriated therefor by the Legislature, the department shall develop: (i) uniform evaluation reports, to be performed by the principal or assistant principal, to collect data for the annual overall program evaluation conducted by the department; or (ii) a program evaluation model that, at a minimum, addresses process evaluation; and

(c) Promulgate rules, regulations and such other standards deemed necessary to effectuate the purposes of this section. Noncompliance with the provisions of this section and any rules, regulations or standards adopted by the department may result in a violation of compulsory accreditation standards as established by the State Board of Education and the Commission on School Accreditation.

(6) Each school district shall be allotted sufficient funding under the total funding formula provided in Sections 37-151-200 through 37-151-215 for the purpose of employing assistant teachers. *** * *** No school district shall pay any assistant teacher less than the state minimum salary. No district shall reduce the local supplement or amount paid to an individual assistant teacher by the district below the state minimum salary contained in this section from the previous year in a year in which the state minimum salary is increased. Should any district violate this subsection (6), such district's funding shall be reduced by twice the amount of such reduction when computing the district's allocation of total funding formula funds. However, districts are authorized to reduce the state minimum salary by a pro rata daily amount where there has been a reduction in (a) adequate education program allocations for such district in such year, or (b) the amount of federal funds to such district compared to the amount received from the previous year. Nothing herein contained shall prohibit any district from adopting or continuing a program or plan whereby assistant teachers are paid varying salaries according to classroom performance and other similar standards.

For assistant teachers, the minimum annual salary shall be as follows:

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2026-2027 and Subsequent Years.....$19,000.00

In addition, for each one percent (1%) that the Sine Die General Fund Revenue Estimate Growth exceeds five percent (5%) in fiscal year 2006, as certified by the Legislative Budget Office to the State Board of Education and subject to the specific appropriation therefor by the Legislature, the State Board of Education shall revise the salary scale in the appropriate year to provide an additional one percent (1%) across-the-board increase in the base salaries for assistant teachers. The State Board of Education shall revise the salaries prescribed above for assistant teachers to conform to any adjustments made in prior fiscal years due to revenue growth over and above five percent (5%). The assistant teachers shall not be restricted to working only in the grades for which the funds were allotted, but may be assigned to other classes as provided in subsection (2)(a) of this section.

(7) (a) As an alternative to employing assistant teachers, any school district may use the funding provided under subsection (6) of this section for the purpose of employing licensed teachers for kindergarten, first-, second- and third-grade classes; however, no school district shall be authorized to use the funding for assistant teachers for the purpose of employing licensed teachers unless the district has established that the employment of licensed teachers using such funds will reduce the teacher:student ratio in the kindergarten, first-, second- and third-grade classes. All state funds for assistant teachers shall be applied to reducing teacher:student ratio in Grades K-3.

It is the intent of the Legislature that no school district shall dismiss any assistant teacher for the purpose of using the assistant teacher funding to employ licensed teachers. School districts may rely only upon normal attrition to reduce the number of assistant teachers employed in that district.

(b) Districts meeting the highest levels of accreditation standards, as defined by the State Board of Education, shall be exempted from the provisions of subsection (4) of this section.

SECTION 3. It is the intent of the Legislature that all full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors and course instructors of any institution of higher learning or community or junior college receive a salary increase of Two Thousand Dollars ($2,000.00) above their current salaries.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2026.