

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

2002 Regular Session

To: Education; Appropriations

By: Senator(s) Harden, Dawkins, Jordan, Gollott, Horhn

Senate Bill 2249

(As Sent to Governor)

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-13-133, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL EMPLOY A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY COORDINATOR K-12 SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS; TO CODIFY NEW SECTION 37-13-134, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE LEGISLATIVE INTENT REGARDING PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN GRADES K-9; TO SPECIFY THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY COORDINATOR; TO REQUIRE THE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY COORDINATOR TO PRESENT A STATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PLAN EACH YEAR; TO REQUIRE THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO CONDUCT A STUDY AND SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE HOUSE AND SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEES ON THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-13-133, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-13-133. Under the provisions of Section 37-13-131, the State Department of Education may provide for the services of a School Health Services Coordinator, School Instruction Coordinator, School Environmental Specialist, * * * and such other professional and nonprofessional staff as may be needed and as funds available to the department will permit. The State Department of Education, subject to the availability of funds specifically for such purpose, shall employ a physical activity coordinator K-12 not later than sixty (60) days after receipt of such funds, in accordance with the provisions of Section 37-13-134. It shall be the responsibility of that professional staff to coordinate efforts of the personnel of the State Department of Education, the state's colleges and universities, local public schools and other appropriate agencies to provide the comprehensive health education curriculum.

SECTION 2. The following shall be codified as Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972:

37-13-134. (1) The Legislature recognizes that there is a problem with Mississippi student inactivity and obesity in the elementary school years, and therefore recommends the following guidelines for school district physical education and fitness classes: Grades Kindergarten through Six: thirty (30) minutes per day; Grades Seven through Nine: two (2) hours per week.

(2) Until such time that state-source funds can be appropriated, it is the intention of the Legislature that the State Department of Education make application for any federal funds available to implement this recommendation and to employ a physical activity coordinator.

(3) The physical activity coordinator employed under Section 37-13-133 must have the qualifications prescribed in any of the following paragraphs, which are listed in the order of preference:

(a) A doctorate in physical education, exercise science or a highly related field, and at least three (3) years of experience in teaching physical education in grades K-12 or in physical activity promotion/fitness leadership; or

(b) A master's degree in physical education, exercise science or a highly related field, and at least five (5) years of experience in teaching physical education in grades K-12 or in physical activity promotion/fitness leadership; or

(c) A bachelor's degree in physical education, a teacher's license, and at least seven (7) years of experience in teaching physical education in grades K-12 or in physical activity promotion/fitness leadership.

(4) The Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports created under Section 7-1-551 et seq., the Mississippi Council on Obesity Prevention and Management created under Section 41-101-1 et seq., the Task Force on Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention created under Section 41-103-1 et seq., the Mississippi Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, and the Mississippi Alliance for School Health shall provide recommendations to the State Department of Education regarding the employment of the physical activity coordinator. The department shall consider the recommendations of those entities in employing the physical activity coordinator.

(5) The physical activity coordinator shall present a state physical activity plan each year to the Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports, the Mississippi Council on Obesity Prevention and Management, the Task Force on Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, and the Mississippi Alliance for School Health.

(6) The physical activity coordinator shall monitor the districts for adherence to current Mississippi school accountability standards and for implementation of the physical education curriculum on file with the State Department of Education.

(7) The State Department of Education shall conduct a study on the correlation between physical activity or exercise and classroom performance. The study must include recommendations for the implementation of a healthy schools program. The department shall

submit a report on the results of the study, including recommendations for legislation, to the chairmen of the Education Committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate before December 1, 2002.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2002.
