MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION 2018

By: Senator(s) Branning (By Request) To: Education

SENATE BILL NO. 2139

AN ACT TO AMEND SECTIONS 37-17-7 AND 37-15-33, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO PROVIDE THAT GRADES AND COURSEWORK COMPLETED BY ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS ATTENDING NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS ACCREDITED BY CERTAIN RECOGNIZED ACCREDITING AGENCIES SHALL BE ACCEPTED FOR CREDIT AT ANY MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SCHOOL, MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY OR JUNIOR COLLEGE OR MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC UNIVERSITY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37-17-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-17-7. (1) Any nonpublic school may, through its governing body, request that the State Board of Education approve such institution. Approval shall be based upon a process promulgated by the State Board of Education; provided, however, that in no event shall the State Board of Education adopt more stringent standards for approval of nonpublic schools than the accreditation standards applied to public schools.

(2) Any course credit and grade completed by a student attending a nonpublic school accredited by any one of the following accrediting agencies shall be accepted for credit by any

public school to which the student is legally transferred and shall be accepted for purposes of enrollment in any Mississippi community or junior college or Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning: the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS); the Southern Plains Association of Christian Schools; the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS); the American Association of Christian Schools; the Association of Christian Schools International; the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; the Mississippi Association of Christian Schools; and the Mississippi Private School Education Association.

SECTION 2. Section 37-15-33, Mississippi Code of 1972, is amended as follows:

37-15-33. (1) All students seeking to transfer from any school, public, private or homeschool within or outside of the boundaries of the State of Mississippi, to a public school within the state may be required to take a test to determine the grade and class to which the pupil shall be assigned at the time of pupil transfer.

The administrative head of each public school shall administer the test or tests to such pupil or pupils as shall apply for transfer to such public school. Such test or tests shall be administered within thirty (30) days after the filing of each such application for transfer. Notice of the giving of such test shall be given the applicant not less than five (5) days prior to the date of the administration of such test.

No transfer of a pupil shall be effected until the test has been given and the pupil is assigned according to the grade and class for which the test shows he is best suited. No pupil shall be assigned to a grade and class more than three (3) grades above or below the grade or class that the pupil would have been assigned to had the pupil remained in the school from which the transfer is being made. Pending the administration of the test herein provided for and its grading and an assignment based thereon the superintendent of the school district or the attendance center principal to which the pupil seeks admission may assign the pupil temporarily to a grade and class comparable to that in which the pupil would have been had the pupil continued in the school from which the transfer was being made.

If any student is transferred or reassigned within the school district by order of the board of trustees of that school district as designated by law of the State of Mississippi and not at his own request, the requirement of that pupil's taking the standardized test shall be waived. Likewise, if a pupil shall transfer from one (1) school district to another school district in the manner provided and required by the laws of the State of Mississippi, the requirement of such pupil taking the standardized test shall be waived.

(2) Any course credit and grade completed by a student attending a nonpublic school accredited by any one of the following accrediting agencies shall be accepted for credit by any

public school to which the student is legally transferred and shall be accepted for purposes of enrollment in any Mississippi community or junior college or Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning: the Mississippi Association of Independent Schools (MAIS); the Southern Plains Association of Christian Schools; the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS); the American Association of Christian Schools; the Association of Christian Schools International; the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; the Mississippi Association of Christian Schools; and the Mississippi Private School Education Association.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2018.

ST: Nonpublic schools accredited by certain agencies; authorize students to transfer course credit and grades.