MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION 2021

By: Representative Boyd To: Education

HOUSE BILL NO. 559

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE TOLL-FREE TELEPHONE NUMBER OPERATED BY THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES FOR RECEIVING REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT TO BE POSTED IN ALL PUBLIC AND CHARTER SCHOOLS; TO REQUIRE THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO ADOPT RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE CONTENT, SIZE AND LOCATION OF SUCH SIGNS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. (1) The school board of each school district and the governing board of each charter school in the state shall post in each school, in at least one (1) high traffic, clearly visible public location that is readily accessible to students, a sign in both English and Spanish which contains the toll-free telephone number operated by the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services to receive reports of child abuse and neglect.

(2) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules and regulations relating to the content, size and location of the sign required to be posted under subsection (1). At a minimum, the rules and regulations must require each sign:

(a) To be in a format and language that is clear, simple and understandable to students at the grade levels in the school in which the sign is posted;

(b) To have the toll-free telephone number printed in bold print;

(c) To include instructions to call 911 for emergencies;

(d) To include the website address for the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services and directions on accessing the website for the purpose of submitting a report of child abuse or neglect or obtaining additional information on reporting abuse, neglect and exploitation; and

(e) To be in large print on a poster that is no less than eleven (11) by seventeen (17) inches in size, which poster must be placed at eye level to students to facilitate easy viewing.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2021.