

OFFICE OF CHIEF ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
Consent Agenda
June 19, 2025

OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY
OFFICE OF ACADEMIC EDUCATION

- N. Action: Approval to revise student teacher ratio requirements beginning with the 2025-2026 school year and begin the Administrative Procedures Act process for the following:
- A. To revise State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1 – Class Size
 - B. To revise the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2024* specifically, Process Standards 2, 28.1, 28.2, 28.3, and 28.4, and the Glossary
 - C. To revise the *Mississippi Nonpublic School Accountability Standards, 2024* specifically, Process Standards 2, 24, 24.1, 24.2, 24.3, and 24.4, and the Glossary
 - D. To establish Process Standards 28.6 and 28.7 of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2024*
 - E. To establish Process Standards 24.7 and 24.8 of the *Mississippi Nonpublic School Accountability Standards, 2024*

Background Information: As part of the MS Student Funding Formula (MSFF) enacted by the MS Legislature in July 2024, Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77, mandating specific student-teacher ratios in Mississippi classrooms was repealed. As part of the MSFF that became effective July 2024, Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-213 was enacted and provides the Commission on School Accreditation the authority to establish student-teacher ratios and the State Board of Education the authority to approve or disapprove of waiver requests of established ratios submitted by local districts. On June 5, 2025, at their regularly scheduled meeting, the Commission on School Accreditation unanimously approved the proposed revisions that will help clarify the student-teacher ratios in the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2024*, and the waiver request process outlined in State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1 and beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up materials attached

Chapter 19: Class Size

Rule 19.1 Class Size. When the personnel report from each district is submitted to the MDE the following procedure will be implemented:

1. If the enrollment in any class ~~exceed the student teacher ratios outlined in the current edition of the Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, grades 1-4 is greater than 27 and/or the number of students taught by any individual teacher exceeds 150~~, MSIS will alert the district and MDE staff will notify the district in writing and request an explanation as to the reasons for the overage.
2. The district shall submit documentation that the situation has been corrected or request an ~~exemption/waiver~~. The request for ~~exemption/waiver~~ will describe the situation and provide justification as to why the ~~exemption/waiver~~ should be approved. This request ~~should~~ shall include at a minimum:
 - a. ~~explanation and justification of an alternative educational program to serve the needs of enrollment~~
 - b. the number of classes in that school that serve the same grade,
 - c. whether there is a school reasonably close by to which the children over the maximum could be transferred,
 - d. a clear description of why an additional class cannot be added to alleviate the overload, and
 - e. other emergency, hardship, or special situations which justify an exemption.
3. MDE staff ~~(Exemptions Committee)~~ will review the request for ~~exemption/waiver~~ and make a recommendation to the SBE.
4. The SBE shall disapprove or approve ~~exemption/waiver~~ requests ~~no later than forty-five (45) days after the receipt of the application.~~
5. A school district may appeal the denial of an ~~exemption waiver~~ by submitting a request within fourteen (14) days of receipt of notification to the State Board.
6. The SBE's decision on an appeal is final. ~~If a school district violates the provisions of Mississippi Code 37-151-77, the state aid for the ensuing fiscal year to such school district shall be reduced by the percentage variance that the actual pupil teacher ratios in such school district has to the required pupil teacher ratios mandated in this section.~~ If a school district violates a required student-teacher ratio, the state share in support of the funding formula for the next succeeding fiscal year to that school district must be reduced by the

percentage variance that the actual student-teacher ratios in the school district is to the required student-teacher ratios established under accreditation standards.

Any district meeting the highest levels of performance are exempt from the maximum pupil teacher ratio as outlined in the current edition of the *Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards*. ~~in Grades 1, 2, 3, and 4.~~

Source: Miss. Code Ann. ~~§-MS Code~~ 37-151-~~77-213~~ (Revised 2/2012, TBD)

Proposed revisions to

Mississippi Public School Accountability Standards, 2024

2. All district professional positions requiring licensed staff are filled by staff that are properly licensed and endorsed as required by state law and federal requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-77, Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 80.1 and 80.2. State Board Policy Chapter 80, Rules 80.1 and 80.2, and ESEA, and Federal Code. (NOTE: Teachers with endorsements in grades 7-12 content areas may teach the content in which they are endorsed in grades 5 and 6, if departmentalized.)
28. In accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-213 and Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 19.1 State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1, student teacher ratios do not exceed the following:
 - 28.1 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 22 to 1 in kindergarten, except in instances in which a fulltime assistant teacher is in the classroom. If a full-time assistant teacher is employed, 27 may be enrolled. ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77~~ See Mississippi Kindergarten Guidelines, ~~Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 19.1, State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1.~~
 - 28.2 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 27 to 1 in classrooms serving grades 1 through 4 unless approved by the State Board of Education. A one-year waiver may be requested for classes that do not exceed more than two (2) students beyond the allowable student teacher ratio. Schools Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance ~~are exempted~~ may include a 29 to 1 ratio without requesting a waiver. No waivers will be allowed for student teacher ratios exceeding 29 to 1. ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77, Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 19.1, State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1.~~
 - 28.3 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 30 to 1 in ~~self-contained~~ classes serving grades 5-8 (excluding special education self-contained classrooms). ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77~~ A one-year waiver may be requested for classes that do not exceed more than two (2) students beyond the allowable student teacher ratio. Schools Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance may include a 32 to 1 ratio without requesting a waiver. No waivers will be allowed for student teacher ratios exceeding 32 to 1.
 - 28.4 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 33 to 1 in departmentalized academic core classes serving grades 5-12. ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77~~ A one-year waiver may be requested for classes that do not exceed more than two (2) students beyond the allowable student teacher ratio. Schools Meeting the Highest Levels of

Performance may include a 35 to 1 ratio without requesting a waiver. No waivers will be allowed for student teacher ratios exceeding 35 to 1.

28.5 The total number of students taught by an individual teacher in academic core subjects at any time during the school year shall not exceed 150. A teacher who provides instruction through intra-district or inter-district distance learning or supervises students taking virtual courses will be exempt from the 150-student limitation. A lab facilitator or principal designee will be responsible for the assignment of grades and related activities at the receiving school. Schools Meeting the Highest Levels of Performance are exempted.

28.6 Teachers of rotational courses in any school with a grade configuration that includes grades K-6 that traditionally include more students than outlined in Process Standards 28.2, 28.3, 28.4, and 28.5 (i.e., elementary physical education, music, arts, speech-language therapist, etc.,) may exceed the ratios outlined in those standards. However, schools shall ensure adequate supervision by certified staff of those students at all times.

28.7 Teachers of courses in any school with a grade configuration that includes grades 6-12 that traditionally include more students than outlined in Process Standards 28.3, 28.4, and 28.5 (i.e., team sports, band, musical performance, speech-language therapist, etc.,) may exceed the ratios outlined in those standards. However, schools shall ensure adequate supervision by certified staff of those students at all times.

GLOSSARY

ACADEMIC CORE

Required course offerings in which specific skills contained in the Mississippi College- and Career- Readiness Standards and Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks must be taught.

~~Subjects in the academic core are English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, world languages, and the arts (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts).~~

Academic core subjects include English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, world language, civics, government, economics, arts, history and geography) *Source: Guidelines for Mississippi Educator Licensure, Appendix G.*

Proposed revisions to

Mississippi NonPublic School Accountability Standards, 2024

2. All professional positions are required to be filled by licensed staff that are properly endorsed as required by state law. Miss. Code Ann. § 37-9-77, Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 80.1 and 80.2. State Board Policy Chapter 80, Rules 80.1 and 80.2.

(NOTE: Teachers with endorsements in grades 7-12 content areas may teach the content in which they are endorsed in grades 5 and 6, if departmentalized.)

24. A one-year waiver may be requested for classes that do not exceed more than two (2) students beyond the allowable student teacher ratio. Student teacher ratios do not exceed the following: Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-~~77~~ 213, Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 19.1, State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1.

24.1 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 22 to 1 in kindergarten, except in instances in which a full-time assistant teacher is in the classroom. If a full-time assistant teacher is employed, 27 may be enrolled. ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77~~, See Mississippi Kindergarten Guidelines, ~~Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 19.1, State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1.~~

24.2 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 27 to 1 in classrooms serving grades 1 through 4 unless approved by the State Board of Education. ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77. Miss. Admin. Code 7-3: 19.1, State Board Policy Chapter 19, Rule 19.1.~~

24.3 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 30 to 1 in self-contained classes serving grades 5-8 (excluding special education self-contained classrooms) ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77.~~

24.4 Student teacher ratios do not exceed 33 to 1 in departmentalized academic core classes serving grades 5-12. ~~Miss. Code Ann. § 37-151-77~~

24.5 The total number of students taught by an individual teacher in academic core subjects at any time during the school years shall not exceed 150. A teacher who provides instruction through intra-district or inter-district distance learning or supervises students taking virtual courses will be exempt from the 150-student limitation. A lab facilitator or principal designee will be responsible for the assignment of grades and related activities at the receiving school.

24.6 The caseload of each teacher in a special purpose school will be based on the needs of the student population and the mission of the school.

- 24.7 Teachers of rotational courses in any school with a grade configuration that includes grades K-6 that traditionally include more students than outlined in Process Standards 24.2, 24.3, 24.4, and 24.5 (i.e., elementary physical education, music, arts, speech-language therapist, etc.,) may exceed the ratios outlined in those standards at the discretion of the MDE. However, schools shall ensure adequate supervision by certified staff of those students at all times.
- 24.8 Teachers of courses in any school with a grade configuration that includes grades 6-12 that traditionally include more students than outlined in Process Standards 24.3, 24.4, and 24.5 (i.e., team sports, band, musical performance, speech-language therapist, etc.,) may exceed the ratios outlined in those standards at the discretion of the MDE. However, schools shall ensure adequate supervision by certified staff of those students at all times.

GLOSSARY

ACADEMIC CORE Required course offerings in which specific skills contained in the Mississippi College- and Career-Ready Standards and Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks must be taught. ~~Subjects in the academic core are English/language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, and the arts (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual arts).~~ Academic core subjects include English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, world language, civics, government, economics, arts, history and geography).
Source: Guidelines for Mississippi Educator Licensure, Appendix G.

AdvancED

~~A non-profit, non-governmental organization that accredits primary and secondary schools throughout the United States and internationally. AdvancED was formed in 2006 by the consolidation of the pre-college divisions of two (2) of the U.S. regional accreditation organizations: the Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA CASI), and the Council on Accreditation and School Improvement of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS CASI). In 2012, the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC) joined AdvancED. Information is also available on-line at www.advanc-ed.org.~~