
**OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: SB 2239 (SCHOOL SAFETY BILL)
DATE: 3/21/01
CC: FILE

SB 2239 (School Safety Bill)

SB 2239 requires MDE to establish a School Safety Center, local districts to adopt comprehensive school safety plans and MDE to provide a crisis quick response team. SB 2239 also amends SB 2390 to provide that MDE not use any TANF funds to develop the peer mediation models.

SB 2239 requires the expulsion of a student 13 years or older on the third time occurrence of habitually disruptive behavior during a school year and provides for a psychological exam to be performed on a student younger than 13 after the second act of disruptive behavior. SB 2239 defines “disruptive behavior” as conduct of a student that is so disruptive it seriously interferes with the teacher or administrator’s ability to communicate with students, with a student’s ability to learn or with the operation of a school or school-related activity. SB 2239 defines “habitually disruptive” to such actions of a student that cause disruption on more than 2 occasions during a school year. No student shall be considered habitually disruptive before the development of a behavioral modification plan for a student who causes a disruption for a second time during the school year. SB 2239 amends current CODE to require a school’s Code of Student Conduct to be made available to students and prescribes additional policies (teacher authority, student disruption, behavior modification plans and gang-related activities) that must be included. SB 2239 requires districts’ incorporation of these provisions at the next legal audit of districts’ discipline plan and Code of Student Conduct. SB 2239 allows a parent to accompany their child to school as an alternative to the child’s suspension.

Several House members expressed concern that the Legislature was mandating actions under the purview of the discretion of local districts due to SB 2239’s requirement that districts’ codes of conduct include development of behavior modification. MAE and AFT support this bill. Senator Tom King, who handled the bill for the Lieutenant Governor’s Office, referred to the bill as a “teacher retention bill” and said that we wouldn’t need the bill if principals were doing their job. The NAACP and Southern Echo/The Mississippi Education Group out of Greenville oppose SB 2239.