



## MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Lance Evans, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent

June 15, 2026

Dear Members of the Legislature:

The Mississippi Department of Education ("MDE") requests clarification regarding certain compensation provisions for school attendance officers ("SAOs") set forth in Senate Bill 2103, enacted during the 2026 Regular Session. As the MDE prepares to implement these provisions effective July 1, 2026, we seek the Legislature's guidance to ensure that our administration of the new salary scale faithfully reflects the Legislature's intent and is applied consistently.

Three specific questions have arisen during our implementation planning. We respectfully request the Legislature's guidance on each:

### **1. Salary increase for existing SAOS.**

SB 2103 does not contain explicit statutory language directing a salary increase for SAOs already employed as of the effective date. The MDE understands that the Legislature provided funding in connection with this legislation to support a salary increase of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per officer. The MDE seeks clarification as to whether it is the Legislature's intent that each existing SAO receives an annual salary increase in the amount of \$5,000.

### **2. Application of the new salary scale to existing SAOs.**

[Section 7] of SB 2103 provides that, effective July 1, 2026, "any newly hired school attendance officers shall be paid a minimum salary as provided in the table" set forth in the bill. By its terms, this provision addresses officers who are newly hired on or after the effective date. The MDE seeks clarification as to whether it is the Legislature's intent that **existing** SAOs—those employed prior to July 1, 2026—also be compensated according to the new minimum salary scale.

For example, during the 2026-2027 school year, if an SAO achieves a "years of experience" milestone as identified in statute, will their salary increase now follow the new salary scale adopted in SB 2103?

### **3. Removal of the experience restriction.**

SB 2103 amends the prior requirement that an officer's "annual salary shall be based on years of experience as a school attendance officer or related field of service or employment." The MDE

seeks clarification as to whether it is the Legislature's intent to remove the limitation that qualifying experience be confined to service as a school attendance officer or a related field—that is, whether the Legislature intends for a broader range of relevant experience to be credited in determining a SAO's placement on the salary scale.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lance Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lance Evans, Ed.D.  
State Superintendent of Education