

**OFFICE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**  
**Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items**  
**May 21, 2020**

**OFFICE OF ACADEMIC EDUCATION**

01. Action: Approval by the SBE to suspend strict compliance with Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-10 for the 2019 - 2020 school year following Governor Tate Reeves' Proclamation of a State of Emergency as a result of the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on school districts during the Spring of 2020 in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15- 11(c)(1) [Goals 1 and 2 – MBE Strategic Plan]

President Donald Trump declared a national emergency on March 13, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak. On March 14, 2020, Governor Tate Reeves issued a Declaration of a State of Emergency for the state of Mississippi. Included in his Proclamation, Governor Reeves directed that pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. § 33-15-11(c), the provisions of state statutes, rules, regulation or order may be temporarily suspended or modified if compliance with such provisions would prevent, hinder, or delay action to cope with the outbreak. Furthermore, on March 19, 2020, Governor Reeves issued Executive Order 1460, and on April 22, 2020, Governor Reeves issued Executive Order 1476, which in accordance with Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31. 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1), authorizes and empowers the State Board of Education to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statutes, and to make, amend, rescind such orders, rules and regulations that it deems necessary to assist Mississippi public schools to cope with the COVID-19 emergency.

Mississippi Code Ann. § 37-13-10 sets out statutory requirements for the instruction and assessment of cursive handwriting; however, strict compliance is not feasible at this time due to the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

It is the recommendation of the MDE that the SBE suspend specific requirements within state laws:

- Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-10

This item references Goals 1 and 2 of the *Mississippi Board of Education 2018-2022 Strategic Plan*.

Recommendation: Approval

Back-up material attached

**Statute Suspension Pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. §§ 33-15-31, 33-15-11(b)(9) and 33-15-11(c)(1)  
Executive Order 1460  
2019 - 2020 School Closures Related to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)**

<b>Statutes and/or Regulation(s)</b>	<b>Rule</b>	<b>Proposed Suspension and/or Revisions of Statutes/Rules</b>
<p><b>Cursive Writing</b> Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-10</p>	<p>Miss. Code Ann. § 37-13-10 The standard course of study shall include the requirement that the public schools provide instruction in cursive reading and writing, implemented across the curriculum, so that students create readable documents through legible cursive handwriting by the end of the fifth grade, and that students pass with proficiency a teacher-constructed test demonstrating the students competency in both reading and writing cursive.</p>	<p>The MDE is suspending the requirement that students pass with proficiency a teacher-constructed test demonstrating competency in both reading and writing cursive, from March 16, 2020, the first date of school closures due to COVID-19, through the date classes resume following the state of emergency. This test shall be suspended for students who would have taken it this year based on district practice.</p>