HLS 22RS-1733

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 963

BY REPRESENTATIVE ORGERON

CURRICULUM: Requires instruction in water safety for public school students

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:276.1 and 3996(B)(67), relative to required instruction in public schools; to require instruction in water safety for public school students; to provide relative to materials used for such instruction; to require public school governing authorities to adopt policies to implement such instruction; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Riley Bourgeois Act".

Section 2. The legislature finds and declares the following:

(1) Drowning is the number one cause of accidental death among children ages one to four and the second leading cause of accidental death in children under the age of fourteen in our nation.

(2) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the third leading cause of death in children ages one to four in our state.

(3) For every child who dies from drowning, another eight children receive emergency department care for non-fatal drowning.

(4) There were twenty-four infant and child drownings in our state in 2020.

Section 3. R.S. 17:276.1 and 3996(B)(67) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§276.1. Water safety; required instruction

A.(1) Age- and grade-appropriate instruction on water safety shall be provided to each public school student. Such instruction shall be incorporated into
an existing required course, such as health, physical education, or another course deemed appropriate by the public school governing authority.

(2) At a minimum, such instruction shall include instruction on the following:

(a) The proper use of flotation devices.
(b) Awareness of water conditions.
(c) The proper supervision of swim areas.
(d) Safe behaviors in and around the water.
(e) The importance of pool barriers and fencing.
(f) The importance of formal swim lessons.
(g) The importance of avoiding alcohol and substance use with water recreation.
(h) The importance of cardiopulmonary resuscitation for drowning victims and the importance of administering such aid.

B.(1) Each governing authority shall adopt policies necessary for the implementation of this Section.

(2) Each governing authority may customize the instruction for its student population based on geographic characteristics and any other special circumstances applicable to the school or school district.

C.(1) The state Department of Education shall establish and maintain a clearinghouse of instructional materials and information regarding model water safety curricula and best practices for water safety instruction.

(2) The department shall review the materials and information at least once biannually and revise them based on updated information, as needed.

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§3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements

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B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a
charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this
Chapter and its approved charter and the school's officers and employees shall be
exempt from all statutory mandates or other statutory requirements that are
applicable to public schools and to public school officers and employees except for
the following laws otherwise applicable to public schools with the same grades:

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute
part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 963 Engrossed  2022 Regular Session  Orgeron

Abstract: Requires water safety instruction for public school students.

Proposed law requires public schools to provide age- and grade-appropriate classroom
instruction on water safety. Requires such instruction be integrated into existing curriculum.

Proposed law authorizes each public school governing authority to customize instruction
based on geography and any other special circumstances.

Proposed law requires the state Dept. of Education establish and maintain a clearinghouse
of instructional materials and information regarding water safety instruction.

Proposed law is applicable to all public schools, including charter schools.

(Adds R.S. 17:267.1 and 3996(B)(67))