AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:4035.2, relative to public school choice in certain high school programs; to provide for high school programs of choice; to provide for eligibility criteria for students and high schools; to provide for restrictions; to provide relative to the responsibilities of public school systems; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:4035.2 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§ 4035.2. Public high school program of choice

A. For the purposes of this Section, a "program of choice" shall mean a public high school program that allows a student to concurrently pursue a high school diploma and one of the following:

(1) A postsecondary degree, credential, or certificate.
(2) A state-registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship.

B. A student may enroll in a program of choice offered within his school system, without regard to attendance zones, provided that both of the following apply:

(1) The program of choice and the high school offering the program have
available capacity at the appropriate grade level.

(2) The program of choice is not offered at the public high school in which the student was most recently enrolled or would otherwise attend.

C. The governing authority of each public high school shall adopt policies to govern student transfers to each program of choice that include:

(1) A definition of "capacity" for each high school and each program of choice.

(2) The transfer request period, which shall begin no later than March first and end no earlier than March twenty-eighth, annually.

(3) The process for submitting a transfer request.

(4) Admission requirements, if any, for each program of choice.

(5) The process for requesting review by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with R.S. 17:4035.1(C) of a denial of a request to transfer to a program of choice.

D. The governing authority of each public high school shall:

(1) Partner with local businesses and public postsecondary education institutions to grow programs of choice that are relevant to the school's local area and to the state and that lead to careers in high-demand, high-paying fields.

(2) Work to ensure that programs of choice are evenly distributed, to the greatest extent possible, among the high schools in the school system.

E. The authority to enroll a student in a program of choice shall not be permitted and shall not be exercised if doing so violates an order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

F. The provisions of this Section shall not be construed as requiring a high school or a program of choice with selective admission requirements to enroll a student who does not meet the admission requirements, regardless of whether the school or program of choice has available capacity.

Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
effective on the day following such approval.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cheryl Serrett.

DIGEST
SB 50 Reengrossed 2022 Regular Session Hewitt

Present law provides for public school choice for certain students by allowing students
enrolled in schools that earned a "D" or "F" pursuant to the state's accountability system
during the prior school year to transfer to certain schools that received an "A", "B", or "C".

Proposed law allows a student to enroll in a program of choice under certain circumstances.

Proposed law defines a "program of choice" as a public high school program that allows a
student to concurrently pursue a high school diploma and one of the following:

(1) A postsecondary degree, credential, or certificate.
(2) A state-registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship.

Proposed law allows a high school student to enroll in a program of choice offered within
his school system, without regard to attendance zones, provided that both of the following
apply:

(1) The program of choice and the high school offering the program have available
capacity at the appropriate grade level.
(2) The program of choice is not offered at the public high school in which the student
was most recently enrolled, or would otherwise attend.

Proposed law requires the governing authority of each public high school to adopt policies
to govern student transfers to programs of choice. Proposed law further requires the
governing authority rules to include:

(1) A definition of "capacity" for each high school and each program of choice.
(2) The transfer request period, which shall begin no later than March first and end no
earlier than March twenty-eighth, annually.
(3) The process for submitting a student transfer request for each program.
(4) Admission requirements, if any, for each program.
(5) The process for requesting review of a denial of a request to transfer to a program of
choice by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance
with present law (R.S. 17:4035.1(C)).

Proposed law requires the governing authority of each public high school to partner with
local businesses and public postsecondary education institutions to grow programs of choice
that are relevant to the school's local area and to the state that lead to careers in high-
demand, high-paying fields and to work to ensure the programs are evenly distributed among
the high schools in the school system.

Proposed law restricts the authority to enroll a student in a program of choice if the
enrollment violates an order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

Proposed law provides that the proposed law shall not be construed as requiring a high
school or a program of choice with selective admission requirements to enroll a student who
does not meet the admission requirements, regardless of whether the school or program of
choice has available capacity.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:4035.2)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill

1. Requires each public school governing authority to work to grow programs
   of choice and ensure the programs are evenly distributed.