

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 171

BY REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CARTER

SCHOOLS/BOARDS: Requests that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education study issues pertaining to qualifications for membership on a school board

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study issues
3 pertaining to qualifications for school board membership in Louisiana and to submit
4 a written report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the House
5 Committee on Education not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2018
6 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

7 WHEREAS, the Constitution of Louisiana charges the legislature with providing for
8 the education of the people of the state and establishing and maintaining a public educational
9 system; and

10 WHEREAS, the constitution further provides that it is the goal of the public
11 educational system to provide learning environments and experiences, at all stages of human
12 development, that are humane, just, and designed to promote excellence in order that every
13 individual may be afforded an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential; and

14 WHEREAS, relative to traditional school boards, present law provides for the
15 election of school board members in accordance with the provisions of the Louisiana
16 Election Code and provides that a person is eligible for membership on a school board if he,
17 at the time of qualification as a candidate, is at least eighteen years old, has resided in the
18 state for the preceding two years, and has been actually domiciled for the preceding year in
19 the parish, ward, or district from which he seeks election; the law further provides that each
20 school board member shall be able to read and write; and

1 WHEREAS, relative to charter school boards, present law requires that each
2 proposed charter shall contain or make provision for the organizational, governance, and
3 operational structure of the school and provides that any qualifications required of charter
4 school administrators and governing board members shall be as prescribed in the charter
5 school agreement; and

6 WHEREAS, some citizens have expressed concern that there is no requirement in
7 the law that a traditional or charter school board member have a high school diploma or its
8 equivalent nor any provision relative to determining whether such a person has been
9 convicted of a crime; and

10 WHEREAS, fundamental changes to the qualifications provided by law for school
11 board members may afford the state's students their best chance of success in the classroom
12 and in life; and

13 WHEREAS, other states may have lessons to offer Louisiana in terms of
14 qualifications for school board membership, and these merit serious evaluation and
15 consideration; and

16 WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the state's constitutional duty of affording every
17 student an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential, it is imperative that a study be
18 conducted relative to issues pertaining to qualifications for school board membership in
19 Louisiana.

20 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
21 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and
22 Secondary Education to study issues pertaining to qualifications for school board
23 membership in Louisiana and to submit a written report of findings, conclusions, and
24 recommendations to the House Committee on Education not later than sixty days prior to
25 the beginning of the 2018 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall include an examination, at
27 minimum, of all of the following:

- 28 (1) The advisability and potential effects of requiring a high school diploma or its
29 equivalent as a qualification for school board membership and of providing for limitations
30 on eligibility for school board membership if a person has been convicted of or pled nolo

1 contendere to crimes listed in R.S. 15:587.1(C) or any other crime as determined by the state
2 board.

3 (2) The qualifications for school board membership in states with successful and
4 highly regarded public education systems.

5 (3) Research conducted by think tanks or other academic research on the issue of
6 qualifications of school board members.

7 (4) Recommendations, if any, for legislation related to the qualifications of school
8 board members.

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the
10 president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state
11 superintendent of education.

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)]

HR 171 Original

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Steve Carter

Requests that the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) study issues pertaining to qualifications for school board membership in La. and submit a written report of findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the House Committee on Education at least 60 days before the 2018 R.S. Provides that the report shall include an examination, at minimum, of the following:

- (1) The advisability and potential effects of requiring a high school diploma or its equivalent and of providing for limitations on eligibility for school board membership if a person has been convicted of or pled nolo contendere to a crime.
- (2) The qualifications for school board members in states with successful and highly regarded public education systems.
- (3) Research on the issue of qualifications of school board members.
- (4) Recommendations, if any, for legislation related to the qualifications of school board members.