

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY REPRESENTATIVE NORTON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the state Department of Education to include school-level and system-level data in the annual report that it submits to the legislature regarding the status of health and physical education in public schools, pursuant to R.S. 17:17.4, and to urge and request each public school and public school governing authority to cooperate in responding to the department's survey relative to such report so that such data can be gathered and reported.

WHEREAS, present law, R.S. 17:17, provides in part that the legislature finds that childhood obesity is a growing problem in this state and that the promotion of physical activity and the promotion of the consumption of snacks of higher nutritional value during the school day are first steps in combating this problem and in changing the attitudes and behavior of citizens toward understanding the health benefits that can be derived from participation by children in physical education and activity and by providing and encouraging the consumption of more highly nutritious snacks; and

WHEREAS, in this statute, the legislature further finds that regular physical activity and healthy eating habits can contribute to protection from cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other chronic diseases, reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, help control weight, and help build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints; and

WHEREAS, present law, R.S. 17:17.1, requires each public school that includes any of the grades kindergarten through eight to provide at least thirty minutes each school day of quality moderate to vigorous physical activity for students; such law also encourages students not enrolled in a physical education course at a public secondary school to participate in moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least thirty minutes each day to develop good health and physical fitness and to improve motor coordination and physical skills; and

WHEREAS, this statute also requires each city, parish, and other local public school board to establish a school health advisory council to advise the board on physical activity for students, physical and health education, nutrition, and overall student health; and

WHEREAS, present law, R.S. 17:17.4, requires the state Department of Education to submit a written report to the House and Senate committees on education and the House and Senate committees on health and welfare each year regarding the status of health and physical education in the public elementary and secondary schools in the state, including findings and recommendations; in order to assess such status, the department administers a survey; and

WHEREAS, the survey typically includes questions regarding the employment of health and physical education specialists; the minutes of health education provided per week; the minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity provided daily and weekly; the minutes of recess provided daily; information regarding vending machine contents; and the establishment of School Health Advisory Councils; and

WHEREAS, the survey also inquires, if a school fails to provide at least one hundred fifty minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity weekly, as to the reasons for the lack of compliance; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 report includes an appendix listing the respondents to this survey, including some parish school systems, two state schools, and some charter schools; however, the report does not break down the response data in a way that indicates compliance or lack thereof by each school system overall or each school in particular, and not every school or school system responded to the survey; and

WHEREAS, in order to aptly assess whether or not individual schools and school systems are complying with state laws relative to health and physical education, it is essential that this annual report include school-level and system-level data and that schools and school governing authorities respond to the survey in order to supply such data to the department.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the state Department of Education to include school-level and system-level data in the annual report that it submits to the legislature regarding the status of health and physical education in public schools pursuant to R.S. 17:17.4.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature does hereby urge and request that the report indicate whether or not each school has complied with the requirements of R.S. 17:17.1 relative to daily physical activity, provide this compliance information for each month of the school year, and provide reasons for non-compliance, if applicable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the legislature does hereby urge and request each public school and public school governing authority to cooperate in responding to the department's survey relative to such report so that such data can be gathered and reported.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the state Department of Education's health and physical education coordinator; the executive director of the Louisiana School Boards Association, who shall disseminate a copy to each city, parish, or other local public school board; and the state superintendent of education, who shall disseminate a copy to the governing authority of each charter school and state school.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE