

2021 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 133

BY SENATOR HEWITT

EARLY CHILDHOOD ED. Requests the state Department of Education to recreate the Louisiana Early Literacy Commission to study and make recommendations relative to improving reading proficiency for certain students.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the state Department of Education to recreate the Louisiana Early
3 Literacy Commission to study and make recommendations on how best to develop
4 and implement an aligned system that provides effective, evidence-based reading
5 instruction for children from early childhood through third grade.

6 WHEREAS, in the 2019 Regular Session of the Legislature, Senate Resolution
7 No. 182 requested the creation of the Louisiana Early Literacy Commission; comprised of
8 state education leaders, policymakers, educators, and parents, the commission convened for
9 the first time in September 2019, and the work of the commission culminated in a report
10 released in January 2020 and an addendum released in January 2021; and

11 WHEREAS, in the report addendum, the commission reaffirmed its initial goals,
12 including supporting \$15 million in annual funding to early literacy and having every teacher
13 use a high-quality curriculum to teach students the foundations of reading and language and
14 literacy; and

15 WHEREAS, the commission also asserted that every student who struggles to read
16 ought to receive timely, research-based literacy interventions and every school must have
17 a culture in which all teachers are responsible for and equipped to deliver effective literacy
18 instruction.

1 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
2 does hereby urge and request the state Department of Education to recreate the Louisiana
3 Early Literacy Commission to study and make recommendations on how best to develop and
4 implement an aligned system that provides effective, evidence-based reading instruction for
5 children from early childhood through third grade.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall examine the impact of the
7 COVID-19 pandemic on childhood literacy and recommend responses to that impact.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be composed of
9 twenty-two members as follows:

10 (1) The state superintendent of education, or his designee.

11 (2) The commissioner of higher education, or his designee.

12 (3) The governor, or his designee.

13 (4) Two superintendents from school districts that have implemented successful,
14 evidence-based reading instruction, appointed by the State Board of Elementary and
15 Secondary Education in consultation with the Louisiana Association of School
16 Superintendents.

17 (5) A principal of a school that has implemented successful, evidence-based reading
18 instruction, appointed by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in
19 consultation with the Louisiana Association of School Principals.

20 (6) A Board of Regents staff member, appointed by the commissioner of higher
21 education.

22 (7) A state Department of Education staff member, appointed by the state
23 superintendent of education.

24 (8) The executive director of the Children's Cabinet, or his designee.

25 (9) A parent with a demonstrated commitment to and understanding of
26 evidence-based reading instruction who is a member of Decoding Dyslexia Louisiana,
27 appointed by the state superintendent of education.

28 (10) Two educators with a demonstrated commitment to and understanding of
29 evidence-based reading instruction, appointed by the State Board of Elementary and
30 Secondary Education in consultation with the state superintendent of education and the

1 Center for Development and Learning.

2 (11) The president of the Louisiana Early Childhood Association, or his designee.

3 (12) The president of the Louisiana Association of Colleges of Teacher Education,
4 or his designee.

5 (13) The dean of a college of education of a Louisiana postsecondary education
6 institution who is a member of Deans for Impact, appointed by the commissioner of higher
7 education.

8 (14) The executive director of the Center for Development and Learning, or his
9 designee.

10 (15) The executive director of the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, or his
11 designee.

12 (16) A faculty member or researcher from a Louisiana four-year public
13 postsecondary education institution who is well-versed in evidence-based reading
14 instruction, appointed by the commissioner of higher education.

15 (17) A faculty member or researcher from a Louisiana four-year nonpublic
16 postsecondary education institution who is well-versed in evidence-based reading
17 instruction, appointed by the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and
18 Universities.

19 (18) A member who is well-versed in evidence-based reading instruction, appointed
20 by the Louisiana Reading Association.

21 (19) A member who is well-versed in written language acquisition and
22 evidence-based reading instruction, appointed by the Louisiana Speech-Language-Hearing
23 Association.

24 (20) A teacher who works with students who are deaf or hard of hearing, appointed
25 by the director of the Louisiana School for the Deaf.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that vacancies shall be filled in the manner of
27 original appointment.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the membership shall constitute
29 a quorum for the transaction of business and an affirmative vote of the quorum present is
30 required for any official action of the commission.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members shall serve without compensation but
2 may be reimbursed for expenses as provided by the respective appointing authority.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state superintendent of education and the
4 commissioner of higher education or their designees shall serve as co-chairmen and the state
5 Department of Education shall provide staff support to the commission.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall study and make
7 recommendations relative to improving the reading proficiency of kindergarten through third
8 grade students and shall:

9 (1) Gather and analyze data to determine the degree to which evidence-based
10 reading is being implemented with fidelity in early childhood care and education settings and
11 in public schools.

12 (2) Conduct an assessment of the number of new educators in classrooms, including
13 kindergarten through third grade teachers, special education teachers, and reading specialists
14 who have undergone training in and have skills in evidence-based reading instruction.

15 (3) Make recommendations relative to the following:

16 (a) How colleges of education and alternative certification programs can provide
17 programs of study on evidence-based reading practices for kindergarten through third grade
18 teachers, special education teachers, and reading specialists.

19 (b) How the state department can ensure that all teacher preparation programs
20 produce teacher candidates with the competencies needed to teach evidence-based
21 instruction.

22 (c) How to assist public schools and public school districts in adopting reading
23 programs that utilize systematic and cumulative evidence-based reading instruction.

24 (d) How the state department can equip educators with the evidence-based
25 competencies and skills needed to ensure the reading proficiency of kindergarten through
26 third grade students.

27 (e) How the state department can equip parents with practical tools to address
28 potential literacy loss from the pandemic.

29 (4) Review the implementation of methods to increase reading proficiency among
30 kindergarten through third grade students and establish future benchmarks.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall submit written reports of
2 its findings and recommendations by January 14, 2022, and January 13, 2023, and shall
3 submit a written report on the status of the implementation of its recommendations and state
4 Department of Education progress by January 12, 2024, and these reports shall be submitted
5 to the governor, the Senate Committee on Education, the Board of Regents, the State Board
6 of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Children's Cabinet.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
8 state superintendent of education and the commissioner of higher education.

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

SR 133 Original	DIGEST 2021 Regular Session	Hewitt
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