

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 244

BY REPRESENTATIVES HUGHES AND CARVER

STUDENTS: Expands the purpose of the Steve Carter Literacy Program to include educational services in math

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact Part III of Chapter 43 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes  
3 of 1950, comprised of R.S. 17:4032.1, relative to academic assistance for certain  
4 public school students; to provide for student and service provider eligibility,  
5 program administration, payment amounts and uses, notifications, reports, and  
6 funding; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. Part III of Chapter 43 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of  
9 1950, comprised of R.S. 17:4032.1, is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

10 PART III. STEVE CARTER ~~LITERACY~~ EDUCATION PROGRAM

11 §4032.1. Steve Carter ~~Literacy~~ Education Program; establishment; student  
12 eligibility; service provider eligibility and approval; administration; payment  
13 amounts and uses; notifications; reports; funding

14 A. The Steve Carter ~~Literacy~~ Education Program, referred to in this Part as  
15 the "program", is hereby established for the purpose of providing funds for  
16 supplemental educational services for eligible students.

17 B. A public school student who falls into one of the following categories is  
18 eligible to participate in the program:

19 (1) He is in kindergarten or the first, second, or third grade and is determined  
20 to read below grade level or be at risk for reading difficulties according to the results

1 of a literacy assessment or be at risk for difficulties with mathematics according to  
2 the results of a mathematics assessment.

3 (2) He is in the fourth ~~or fifth~~ through twelfth grade and scored below  
4 mastery in English language arts or mathematics on the state assessment  
5 administered the prior school year.

6 (3) His eligibility cannot be determined according to the measures provided  
7 in Paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Subsection due to the lack of a literacy or  
8 mathematics assessment or state assessment results but he is recommended by his  
9 English language arts or mathematics teacher for participation in the program due  
10 to the student's ~~reading~~ academic difficulties.

11 C. The state Department of Education shall administer and provide for the  
12 implementation of the program pursuant to rules and regulations developed and  
13 adopted for such purpose by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education  
14 in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act.

15 D. In administering the program, the department shall:

16 (1) Evaluate ~~student's~~ students' eligibility for the program.

17 (2) Develop an application process for students and providers and accept  
18 applications.

19 (3) Evaluate providers of supplemental educational services including but  
20 not limited to those with expertise in early literacy or mathematics to determine their  
21 initial and continued eligibility for program payments. The department shall  
22 establish minimum criteria by which approved providers shall be evaluated to ensure  
23 program effectiveness in improving students' reading and mathematics abilities,  
24 including but not limited to performance on approved literacy and mathematics  
25 assessments and the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program state assessment.  
26 Providers that fail to demonstrate improvement in students' reading or mathematics  
27 abilities for two consecutive years shall be deemed ineligible to participate in the  
28 program.

1 (4) Remit payments to such providers for services rendered to students in the  
2 program with the lowest-performing economically disadvantaged students given the  
3 highest priority.

4 (5) Notify the governing authority of each public school of the application  
5 process, requirements, and deadlines for parents and legal guardians.

6 E. By not later than September thirtieth of each year, or as soon as  
7 practicable if a student's reading deficiency is identified after this date, each public  
8 school governing authority shall notify the parent or legal guardian of each student  
9 who is eligible to participate in the program of the process for applying for the  
10 program and other information provided by the department pursuant to Paragraph  
11 (D)(5) of this Section.

12 F.(1) The department shall remit payment for services provided, up to a  
13 maximum of one thousand five hundred dollars per student per school year. Program  
14 money may be used for any of the following eligible purposes that are designed to  
15 improve ~~reading or literacy~~ reading, literacy, or mathematics skills:

16 (a) Books for home use, including electronic or digital books and  
17 subscriptions to online book clubs; however, such costs shall not exceed two hundred  
18 fifty dollars per school year.

19 (b) Instructional materials and curriculum, including but not limited to online  
20 materials, that have been reviewed in accordance with R.S. 17:351.1 and have been  
21 determined to fully align with state academic content standards.

22 (c) Tutoring services provided by a person who is trained in the state  
23 standards for English language arts or mathematics and who holds a valid teaching  
24 certificate in ~~either elementary education or reading~~ elementary education, reading,  
25 or mathematics or holds a baccalaureate or graduate degree in education, English,  
26 mathematics, or another subject area indicative of expertise in reading and literacy  
27 or mathematics.

28 (d) Summer education programs.

29 (e) After-school education programs.

1           (2) The department shall remit payments to approved providers on behalf of  
2 eligible students.

3           (3) Any expenses above the limit established in Paragraph (1) of this  
4 Subsection shall be the responsibility of the student's parent or legal guardian.

5           (4) The department shall develop a procedure for verification that students  
6 in the program received the services for which payments were made.

7           G. The department shall submit a report to the House Committee on  
8 Education and the Senate Committee on Education by not later than April thirtieth  
9 of each year regarding the implementation of the program. The report shall include,  
10 at a minimum, the following information for that year:

11           (1) The total number of students on whose behalf payments were remitted.

12           (2) The public schools in which such students are enrolled and the number  
13 of students on whose behalf payments were remitted in each school.

14           (3) The total dollar amount of payments remitted to approved providers.

15           (4) A list of the approved providers to which payments were remitted and the  
16 supplemental educational services provided to each student.

17           (5) A report relative to the performance of each provider and overall  
18 program performance with respect to improving participants' reading or mathematics  
19 abilities.

20           H. Implementation of the program is subject to the appropriation of funds or  
21 the availability of any local funds for the purposes of this Part. The department may  
22 use any federal or state funds appropriated for the purpose of increasing early  
23 ~~literacy~~ literacy, improving students' mathematics abilities, or supporting academic  
24 achievement among ~~elementary~~ public school students to make program payments.

## 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 244 Original

2024 Regular Session

Hughes

**Abstract:** Expands the Steve Carter Literacy Program to include mathematics and certain public school students in all grades.

Present law provides for a literacy program for certain public school students in grades K-5. Proposed law expands the purpose of program to include mathematics and changes name from the Steve Carter Literacy Program to the Steve Carter Education Program.

Present law provides that a public school student who is in one of the following categories is eligible for the program:

- (1) Enrolled in kindergarten or the first, second, or third grade and reads below grade level or is at risk for reading difficulties according to a literacy assessment.
- (2) Enrolled in the fourth or fifth grade and scored below mastery in English language arts on the state assessment in the prior school year.
- (3) Enrolled in kindergarten through the fifth grade, lacks a literacy or English language arts assessment result, and is recommended for the program by an English teacher.

Proposed law expands eligible students to also include:

- (1) Enrolled in kindergarten or the first, second, or third grade and is at risk for mathematics difficulties according to a mathematics assessment.
- (2) Enrolled in the fourth through 12th grade and scored below mastery in mathematics on the state assessment in the prior school year.
- (3) Enrolled in the sixth through 12th grade and scored below mastery in English language arts on the state assessment in the prior school year.
- (4) Enrolled in kindergarten through the fifth grade, lacks a mathematics assessment result, and is recommended for the program by a mathematics teacher.

Present law gives priority to the lowest-performing, economically disadvantaged students for participation in the program. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides for payments of up to \$1,000 per student per school year for eligible services intended to improve reading or literacy skills. Proposed law increases maximum payment from \$1,000 to \$1,500 and expands eligible services to also include those intended to improve mathematics skills.

Present law requires the Dept. of Education to administer the program pursuant to rules and regulations adopted by the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires public school governing authorities to notify the parents or legal guardians of eligible students of the program and the application process. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law provides that implementation of the program is subject to the appropriation of funds or the availability of local funds. Proposed law retains present law. Present law authorizes the department to use funds appropriated for the purpose of increasing early literacy or supporting academic achievement among elementary school students. Proposed law further authorizes the department to use funds for improving students' mathematics abilities.

(Amends R.S. 17:4032.1)