

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 190

BY SENATOR MURRAY

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Education to study the reliability and validity of the Louisiana Public School Accountability and Assessment.

WHEREAS, in accordance with R.S. 17:391.2, et seq., the state superintendent of education is required to develop and implement a program to provide for educational accountability; and

WHEREAS, since 1999, the state has issued public school and district performance scores; and

WHEREAS, the current system uses a system of letter grades whereby public schools and districts are assigned a grade of A, B, C, D, or F, or T; and

WHEREAS, the letter grade for elementary schools, grades kindergarten through sixth, is based one hundred percent on student achievement on annual assessments in English language arts, math, science, and social studies, with additional points for students who are academically behind who show significant improvement; and

WHEREAS, the letter grade for middle schools, grades seven and eight, is based ninety-five percent on the annual assessments with five percent based on credits earned toward the student's ninth grade year, with additional points for students who are academically behind who show significant improvement; and

WHEREAS, the letter grade for high schools is based twenty-five percent on the ACT score, twenty-five percent on End-of-Course tests, twenty-five percent on graduation cohort rate, and twenty-five percent on graduation index, along with rewards for AP, IB, and dual enrollment coursework, with additional points for students who are academically behind who show significant improvement; and

WHEREAS, other states have adopted similar systems to provide for an accountability system that uses a wider variety of data to determine the performance score

for a public school or public school system; and

WHEREAS, the current system in Louisiana applies the same standard and expectations to all schools of the same level, elementary, middle or high school, despite the fact that individual schools may have varying missions; and

WHEREAS, many school districts have alternative schools that are dedicated to serving students with significant academic or discipline issues, magnet schools, or gifted programs within traditional schools that are selective admissions schools that provide higher academic opportunities; and

WHEREAS, this differentiation in mission is found among the various public charter schools in Louisiana as well; and

WHEREAS, the variation in mission among various public schools calls into question whether applying the same accountability system using the limited elements to determine the performance score provides the best representation to parents and the state as to the level of educational performance of the public school.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Education, in consultation with public school boards, charter school operators, educational and statistical professionals, and members of academia, to study the reliability and validity of the current school and district accountability and the performance scores resulting therefrom.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include a review of the method and manner that other states conduct school and district accountability systems.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study consider the criteria reviewed at the elementary, middle and high school levels in determining school and district performance scores.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education issue a report of the study and its findings, specifically a comparison of the method and manner that other states are using to conduct school and district performance scores and the public education accountability system, recommendations as to the appropriate elements and factors to be considered in determining school and district performance scores, and whether the elements and factors utilized should be the same for schools that have differing core missions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of the report be provided to the House and Senate education committees on or before March 1, 2016, and be published in a readily ascertainable manner on the website maintained by the Louisiana Department of Education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the state superintendent of education.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE