

1 WHEREAS, since 1940 the United States Supreme Court has held that the
2 Establishment Clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States
3 applies not only to congress but to all state and local governments and agencies, including
4 public schools; and

5 WHEREAS, the Establishment Clause has been construed by the United States
6 Supreme Court to preclude government endorsement or disparagement of any religion or of
7 any particular religious view; and

8 WHEREAS, the Establishment Clause has been used to systematically remove the
9 mention of God and the core tenets of traditional theistic religions from public elementary
10 and secondary schools without concurrent removal of the religious issues; and

11 WHEREAS, many believe that this systematic exclusion of theistic views has had
12 the effect of causing public schools to discriminate in favor of, and to indoctrinate children
13 to accept, nontheistic religious views about where we come from, the nature of life, and how
14 it should be lived ethically and morally; and

15 WHEREAS, many also believe that the nontheistic views about religious issues are
16 incorrectly promoted as "secular" or "not religious" since religion is being limited to theistic
17 beliefs; and

18 WHEREAS, there are widespread concerns that curricula which favors nontheistic
19 views about religious issues is not neutral as it effectively endorses nontheistic religious
20 world views over traditional theistic world views; and

21 WHEREAS, for public education to be truly secular and neutral, it must identify
22 issues that are inherently religious and then objectively inform an age appropriate audience
23 about those issues so that the goal and effect of the education is religiously neutral.

24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that in order to instill viewpoint and religious
25 neutrality and to protect the religious rights of parents, students, and taxpayers in public
26 elementary and secondary education, the Legislature of Louisiana hereby encourages the
27 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and all local public schools and school
28 districts to develop guidelines that reflect and accomplish the following objectives:

29 (1) Identify the content of education standards and curricula that address religious
30 issues.

1 (2) Analyze such standards and curricula to determine if they are designed to be
2 taught in an objective and age-appropriate manner so that the goal and effect of the teaching
3 strives to be religiously neutral.

4 (3) Revise or eliminate such standards and curricula that do not comply with the
5 provisions of (2) above.

6 (4) Publish on appropriate websites content that addresses religious issues so that
7 public elementary and secondary education is transparent to parents, students, and taxpayers.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
9 president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state
10 superintendent of education who shall be responsible for disseminating a copy to each public
11 school district.

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)]

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Encourages the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education, public school districts, and public schools to develop guidelines for content standards and curricula relative to the protection of religious rights of students, parents, and state taxpayers.