

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 183

BY REPRESENTATIVE SMITH

STUDENTS: Requests governing authorities of public schools and all nonpublic schools that participate in the voucher program to adopt policies with regard to student fees

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the governing authority of each public school and of each nonpublic
3 school that participates in the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence
4 Program to adopt a policy on the assessment, collection, and use of student fees.

5 WHEREAS, House Concurrent Resolution No. 137 of the 2016 Regular Session of
6 the Legislature requested the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to conduct
7 a study on the prevalence and use of student fees in Louisiana public elementary and
8 secondary schools and to submit a written report of its findings to the House Committee on
9 Education and Senate Committee on Education; and

10 WHEREAS, in response to the resolution, the state Department of Education
11 surveyed public school governing authorities throughout the state about student fees and
12 received responses from close to one hundred percent of such governing authorities; and

13 WHEREAS, fifty-six percent of the public school governing authorities responding
14 reported they have a formal policy on student fees and eighty-nine percent reported that they
15 do not publish a listing of student fees on their websites; and

16 WHEREAS, fees collected by public school governing authorities include fees
17 assessed to all students enrolled, fees assessed for specific course participation, and fees
18 assessed for participation in various student activities, and such fees range from ten dollars
19 per student to up to three hundred dollars per course enrolled; and

20 WHEREAS, public school governing authorities do not have a consistent policy for
21 addressing economic hardships when students are unable to pay fees; and

1 WHEREAS, the study did not address the use of student fees for students attending
2 nonpublic schools that participate in the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence
3 Program; and

4 WHEREAS, public funds are used to educate students who receive vouchers to
5 attend these nonpublic schools; and

6 WHEREAS, all students should have equal access to a quality education; and

7 WHEREAS, the inability to pay fees should not prevent economically disadvantaged
8 students from having access to a quality education whether through a traditional public
9 school, a charter school, or a nonpublic school participating in the voucher program and
10 these students should be given the same opportunities as other students; and

11 WHEREAS, parents of school children should be provided with clear information
12 regarding fees charged to students, including the use of such fees and the process by which
13 they may request a waiver based on economic hardship; and

14 WHEREAS, school governing authorities should engage in an open and transparent
15 process when assessing student fees and adopting policies relative to student fees and should
16 meaningfully consult with parents.

17 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
18 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the governing authority of each public
19 school and of each nonpublic school that participates in the Student Scholarships for
20 Educational Excellence Program to adopt a policy on the assessment, collection, and use of
21 student fees.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the policy shall include but not be limited to the
23 following:

24 (1) A list of all fees, their purpose and use, and the exact dollar amount or authorized
25 range for each.

26 (2) A description of how authorized fees are to be collected and spent.

27 (3) A description of how students or their parents may request a waiver of payment
28 of such fees due to economic hardship.

29 (4) The process for and frequency of the approval of such waivers.

1 (5) A prohibition against assessing any fees not authorized by the governing
2 authority's policy.

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the policy shall be posted to the website of the
4 school governing authority and each school, along with a complete list of authorized fees
5 and a description of the process by which students or their parents may request a waiver due
6 to economic hardship.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature
8 of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the state Department of Education, the Louisiana
9 School Boards Association, and the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools to
10 assist the school governing authorities in developing such policies.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state Department of Education shall submit
12 a report to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education no
13 later than January 1, 2018, identifying the policies that have been adopted by the school
14 governing authorities as provided in this Resolution.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
16 state superintendent of education, the executive director of the Louisiana School Boards
17 Association, and the executive director of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter
18 Schools.

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)]

HR 183 Original

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Smith

Requests the governing authority of each public school and of each nonpublic school that participates in the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program to adopt a policy on the assessment, collection, and use of student fees. Specifies information to be included in such policies and provides that the policies shall be posted on the governing authorities' and schools' websites. Provides that the state Dept. of Education submit a report to the House and Senate education committees by Jan. 1, 2018, on the policies that have been adopted by the school governing authorities.