

2018 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 154

BY SENATOR ERDEY

SCHOOLS. Requests the state Department of Education to create a committee to study and develop mechanisms and processes whereby every student is served a meal at school, regardless of ability to pay.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the state Department of Education to establish a committee to study and  
3 develop mechanisms and processes whereby every student is served a meal at school,  
4 regardless of the student's ability to pay.

5 WHEREAS, it is well documented that the learning capacity of a hungry child is  
6 significantly diminished and no child should ever go hungry at school because of inability  
7 to pay for the meal; and

8 WHEREAS, due to Louisiana's high rate of poverty, it is not uncommon for a student  
9 to be unable to pay for a meal at school; and

10 WHEREAS, although accumulated debt for unpaid meals represents a burden upon  
11 school governing authorities, a student should never be held responsible for a parent's debt;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, a student should not be publicly named, shamed, humiliated,  
14 stigmatized, denied school privileges, excluded from school activities, or served a smaller  
15 or significantly different meal than other students because he cannot pay for a meal or owes  
16 money for a meal; and

17 WHEREAS, the federal Community Eligibility Provision option allows schools and  
18 school districts that meet federal guidelines to serve breakfast and lunch to all enrolled

1 students without having to have individual students apply for and qualify for free and  
2 reduced lunch; and

3 WHEREAS, it is incumbent upon the state and the governing authority of every  
4 public elementary and secondary school to ensure that every student receives a nutritious  
5 meal at school.

6 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
7 does hereby urge and request the state Department of Education to establish a committee to  
8 study and develop mechanisms and processes whereby every student is served a meal at  
9 school, regardless of the student's ability to pay.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall be composed of the  
11 following members:

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

13 (2) The Director of Food and Nutrition Services for the state Department of  
14 Education.

15 (3) The secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services, or his  
16 designee.

17 (4) The executive director of the Louisiana School Boards Association, or his  
18 designee.

19 (5) The executive director of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter schools,  
20 or his designee.

21 (6) The executive director of the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents,  
22 or his designee.

23 (7) The executive director of the Louisiana Association of Principals, or his designee.

24 (8) The president of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, or his designee.

25 (9) The president of the Louisiana Association of Educators, or his designee.

26 (10) The president of the School Nutrition Association of Louisiana, or his designee.

27 (11) The executive director of the Louisiana Budget Project, or his designee.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall, at a minimum:

29 (1) Gather data from each public school governing authority on each instance in  
30 which a student was either denied a meal or was served an alternative meal because of

1 inability to pay during the past three school years.

2 (2) Determine the current level of debt carried by public school governing authorities  
3 for unpaid student meals and how providing a United States Department of Agriculture  
4 reimbursable meal to every student, regardless of ability to pay, would impact that debt.

5 (3) Develop a mechanism whereby the state Department of Education will provide  
6 assistance to public school governing authorities in determining eligibility for and making  
7 application for participation in the federal Community Eligibility Provision option.

8 (4) Develop procedures whereby the state Department of Education will provide  
9 assistance to public school governing authorities in maximizing the number of parents who  
10 fill out an application for free or reduced price meals under the United States Department  
11 of Agriculture's Income Eligibility Guidelines.

12 (5) Identification of any and all available funding streams, including state and federal  
13 grants, that public school governing authorities can utilize to offset any debt incurred from  
14 unpaid student meals.

15 (6) Development of a statewide, uniform policy that requires public school governing  
16 authorities to direct all communication regarding amounts owed for a student's meals to the  
17 student's parent and not the student.

18 (7) Any other considerations, actions, or policies that the committee believes could  
19 reduce the number of students who are denied a United States Department of Agriculture  
20 reimbursable meal.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the first meeting of the committee shall be called  
22 by the state superintendent of education not later than August 15, 2019, and the committee  
23 shall select such officers as it deems necessary at that meeting.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the committee shall serve without  
25 compensation, but may be paid such per diem or be reimbursed for actual expenses as  
26 determined by the appointing authority.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state Department of Education shall submit  
28 a report of the committee's findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on  
29 Education and the House Committee on Education, not later than March 1, 2019.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the

1 president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the state  
2 superintendent of education, the executive director of the Louisiana School Boards  
3 Association, and the executive director of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter  
4 Schools.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Jeanne C. Johnston.

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SR 154 Original

DIGEST  
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