
DIGEST

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CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT DIGEST

HB 306

2018 Regular Session

Thomas

Keyword and oneliner of the instrument as it left the House

SCHOOLS: Provides relative to foreign language immersion programs in public schools

Report adopts Senate amendments to:

1. Relative to present law criteria to be met for establishment of a foreign language immersion program, change criteria to specify that there is no existing foreign language immersion program *in the same language* as that of the program being proposed.
2. Add requirement that the local school board inform parents of all students enrolled in the school system of any newly established foreign language immersion program and permit all eligible students to apply.
3. Add requirement that the local school board make reasonable attempts to place the foreign language immersion program in schools located near the majority of the students who applied.

Report rejects Senate amendments which would have:

1. Repealed present law that provides that school boards are not required to provide transportation to students enrolled in foreign language immersion programs under certain circumstances.

Report amends the bill to:

1. Change present law deadline for parents to submit requests for a program to be established from March 1 to January 31.
2. Change proposed law deadline for schools boards to notify parents relative to number of requests submitted from March 15 to February 15.
2. Prohibit school boards from denying enrollment to students if the student applies for

enrollment by April 15 instead of by March 1.

3. Limit present law and proposed law to foreign language immersion programs in French and Spanish.

Digest of the bill as proposed by the Conference Committee

Present law authorizes a local public school board to establish a foreign language immersion program in any school. Requires a school board to establish a foreign language immersion program if requested in writing by the parents of at least 25 students seeking enrollment in kindergarten or 25 students seeking enrollment in first grade by March 1st of the prior school year and if other specified criteria are met including that there is no existing, certified foreign language immersion program offered by the school board. Provides that school boards are not required to provide transportation to a student enrolled in a foreign language program that is outside of the attendance zone of the school the student would otherwise attend if doing so would be a cost to the school system. Proposed law changes the parent request deadline from March 1st to January 31st.

Present law requires the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to designate a foreign language immersion program that meets specified criteria as a certified program and to promulgate rules to implement such certification process. Requires a school board to ensure that any program established is designated as a certified program in accordance with present law within three years of being established.

Present law requires BESE to include a component in the school and district accountability system for a school that establishes, maintains, or expands a foreign language immersion program or proceeds to earn or maintain certification of a foreign language immersion program. Requires BESE to promulgate rules to implement present law.

Present law prohibits school boards from denying enrollment in such programs to students if specified conditions are met, including that the student applies for enrollment by March 1 of the school year prior to such enrollment. Proposed law changes March 1 to April 15.

Proposed law clarifies that for purposes of present law, "foreign language immersion program" means any type of dual language immersion program in French or Spanish. Adds requirements that school boards:

- (1) Notify parents by February 15 as to whether or not the required number of written requests was submitted to establish a program.
- (2) Inform parents of all students enrolled in the school system of any newly established foreign language immersion program and permit all eligible students to apply during the designated enrollment period.
- (3) Consider the location of all students applying for a foreign language immersion program and make reasonable attempts to place the program in schools located near the majority of the

students who applied.

Proposed law changes present law criteria to be met for establishment of a foreign language immersion program to specify that there is no existing foreign language immersion program *in the same language* as that of the program being proposed.

Proposed law limits applicability of all aspects of present law and proposed law to programs in French or Spanish.

Otherwise retains present law.

(Amends R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2) and (E)(4); Adds R.S. 17:10.1(G)(4), 273.2(D), and 273.3(H))