

1 WHEREAS, with the flexibility given to public school governing authorities to set
2 school calendars best suited for their students, employees, and families, the governing
3 authorities have various options available such as shortening the school week, lengthening
4 the school day, and conducting school year-round; and

5 WHEREAS, over the years, some schools and school systems in Louisiana have
6 implemented a four-day schedule and Avoyelles Parish recently announced its plans to move
7 to this type of schedule beginning in the next school year; and

8 WHEREAS, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL),
9 over five hundred school districts in twenty-five states have one or more schools using a
10 four-day schedule and this option has become more common over the last decade; and

11 WHEREAS, NCSL found that the reasons for implementing the shorter school week
12 vary but most school districts implement it to cut costs due to budget constraints; and

13 WHEREAS, the research further found that the majority of schools using a four-day
14 week are in rural districts but that in recent years some larger, urban districts have begun to
15 consider the option; and

16 WHEREAS, other research shows that in the past few years schools in several states
17 including Florida, Texas, Iowa, Missouri, South Dakota, Montana, and New Mexico have
18 converted to four-day school weeks to save transportation and utility costs, and currently,
19 more than half of Colorado's school districts are using a four-day school week; and

20 WHEREAS, in addition to cost savings, other advantages reported by some that have
21 shortened the school week include improvements in student attendance, academic
22 achievement, and teacher recruitment, more time for professional development and lesson
23 planning for teachers, and parents and teachers can schedule doctor's appointments and other
24 weekday commitments on the day that school is not in session; and

25 WHEREAS, some disadvantages that have been found include difficulty for some
26 parents who are unable to find child care for the one day school is closed each week and
27 students do not have access to school meals on the day off; and

28 WHEREAS, like four-day school weeks, a disadvantage of operating schools on a
29 year-round basis is the difficulty for parents to arrange for child care; other drawbacks

1 include interference with students extracurricular activities, sports schedules, and family
2 vacations; and

3 WHEREAS, some benefits of year-round schooling, as well as lengthening the
4 school day, are more time for student learning, higher academic achievement, maximum
5 utilization of school facilities, and increased teacher pay; and

6 WHEREAS, there is a need to consider research on these and other positive and
7 negative effects of school calendar options for Louisiana's public schools in order to assist
8 public school governing authorities in determining schedules that best meet the needs of
9 their students, employees, and families.

10 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
11 request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the advantages and
12 disadvantages of school calendar options for public schools and to submit a written report
13 of its findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Education and the Senate
14 Committee on Education not later than March 1, 2020.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
16 president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state
17 superintendent of education.

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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Simon

Requests the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the advantages and disadvantages of school calendar options for public schools and to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the House and Senate education committees by March 1, 2020.