

2020 First Extraordinary Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 55

BY REPRESENTATIVE DUPLESSIS

EDUCATION: Requests that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education study the history of racism, racism's effects on public education, and anti-racism education and creates a task force to develop recommendations for implementing such education

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the
3 history of racism in the United States, racism's effects on public education in
4 Louisiana, and anti-racism education and to create a task force to develop
5 recommendations for implementing anti-racism education in public schools.

6 WHEREAS, it is critical to acknowledge systemic racism throughout the history of
7 the United States, including slavery, Jim Crow laws, redlining, voter suppression, and many
8 other ongoing practices; and

9 WHEREAS, nationwide protests have raised awareness about injustices that exist at
10 the intersections of race, class, and gender, including mass incarceration, the school to prison
11 pipeline, zero tolerance disciplinary policies, symbols of white supremacy, police brutality,
12 poverty, unaffordable housing, income disparity, unjust immigration policies, gender
13 inequality, and poor access to healthcare; and

14 WHEREAS, schools should be places where racial equity is exemplified in
15 meaningful, practical ways and have the potential to make positive and tangible social
16 change in the world while empowering students to be stewards of their communities, their
17 classrooms, their campuses, and each other; and

18 WHEREAS, schools are the appropriate places to develop conscientious, analytical,
19 bold thinkers who are equipped to critically analyze racist practices, strive for social justice,
20 and dismantle systemic oppression; the nation's well-being relies on a high quality public

1 education system that confronts systemic bias and institutionalized racism and leads the
2 effort in ensuring that Black students and families thrive; and

3 WHEREAS, according to the state Department of Education, approximately fifty-six
4 percent of the state's public school students are minority students, forty-three percent are
5 Black, and sixty-nine percent are economically disadvantaged; and

6 WHEREAS, to develop critical thinking skills, students should experience curricula
7 that include their cultural references in all aspects of learning and offer full, equitable access
8 to education for students from all cultures; and

9 WHEREAS, Louisiana is committed to academic excellence and personal success
10 for all students, and central to this commitment are racial equity and social justice in order
11 to prepare every student to navigate and compete in a culturally rich society; and

12 WHEREAS, a research paper published in 2011 by the National Education
13 Association states that there is considerable evidence that well-designed and well-taught
14 ethnic studies curricula, which typically include racial issues, have positive academic and
15 social outcomes for all students, regardless of their racial or ethnic backgrounds; and

16 WHEREAS, there is a tremendous opportunity for this state to teach all students
17 about social justice, to be a leader for racial equity, to integrate culturally responsive
18 practices and curricula, and to support students to become leaders in making their own
19 schools safer and more inclusive learning environments; and

20 WHEREAS, the goal of the study provided for in this Resolution is to encourage
21 ongoing critical reflection and courageous conversations concerning systemic racism, racial
22 injustice, and racial and ethnic bias and to affirm the right of Black students to be treated
23 with respect and dignity within schools and communities because when Black people are
24 liberated, all are liberated; and

25 WHEREAS, the goal of creating the task force provided for in this Resolution is to
26 challenge the insidious legacy of institutionalized racism and oppression that has plagued
27 the United States since its founding and to analyze best practices related to the teaching of
28 anti-racism in order to spark an ongoing movement of critical reflection and honest
29 conversations in school communities for people of all ages to engage with issues of social
30 justice.

1 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
2 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the State Board of Elementary and
3 Secondary Education (BESE) to study the history of racism in the United States, racism's
4 effects on public education in Louisiana, and anti-racism education and does hereby create
5 a task force to develop recommendations for implementing anti-racism education in
6 Louisiana's public schools.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that BESE shall submit a written report of study
8 findings to the House Committee on Education and to such task force by December 31,
9 2020, which shall include, at minimum, the following:

10 (1) Analysis and summary of findings related to the effects of symbols of white
11 supremacy on the experiences of students in grades kindergarten through twelve in
12 Louisiana.

13 (2) Analysis and summary of findings related to inherent racism within disciplinary
14 practices, mental health practices, and curricular content and teaching practices.

15 (3) Analysis and summary of best practices related to teaching students about
16 racism.

17 (4) Definitions of and guidelines for appropriate anti-racism education, including
18 grade-appropriate materials and benchmarks and a timeline for exposure to anti-racism
19 education.

20 (5) Identification of appropriate facilitators and teachers of anti-racism education.

21 (6) Analysis of appropriate training and professional development for teachers of
22 anti-racism education.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall have the following eighteen
24 members:

25 (1) The president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education or his
26 designee.

27 (2) Eight members appointed by the state superintendent of education:

28 (a) A representative of the state Department of Education knowledgeable about
29 diversity, equity, and inclusion.

1 (b) Two representatives of community-based nonprofit organizations with a mission
2 related to children and families who shall be reflective of multiple regions throughout the
3 state.

4 (c) Two representatives of community-based nonprofit organizations with a mission
5 inclusive of addressing the school to prison pipeline.

6 (d) One representative from a legal advocacy organization who is knowledgeable
7 on school discipline issues.

8 (e) Two representatives of community-based nonprofit organizations with a mission
9 inclusive of advancing equitable educational opportunities for all.

10 (3) One representative of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers appointed by its
11 president.

12 (4) One representative of the Louisiana Association of Educators appointed by its
13 executive director.

14 (5) One representative of the Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana
15 appointed by its executive director.

16 (6) One representative of the Louisiana Association of Principals appointed by its
17 executive director.

18 (7) One representative of the Louisiana School Boards Association appointed by its
19 executive director.

20 (8) One representative of the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents
21 appointed by its executive director.

22 (9) One representative of the Louisiana School Psychological Association appointed
23 by its president.

24 (10) One representative of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools
25 appointed by its executive director.

26 (11) One representative of the Children's Cabinet appointed by its executive director.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall meet at least twice monthly
28 in January through June of 2021 to do, at minimum, the following:

29 (1) Review the report of findings submitted by BESE pursuant to this Resolution.

30 (2) Develop plans for the implementation of anti-racism education.

1 (3) Submit requests for follow-up information and provide feedback or informational
2 resources to public school governing authorities related to anti-racism education.

3 (4) Solicit and receive from experts information on the implementation and cost of,
4 and available funding for, anti-racism education.

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit to BESE, the state
6 superintendent of education, and the House Committee on Education a written progress
7 report relative to its work, which shall include recommendations, if any, for related
8 legislation, by March 15, 2021, and a final written report of findings, conclusions, and
9 recommendations to these recipients by June 30, 2021.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
11 president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state
12 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)]

HR 55 Original

2020 First Extraordinary Session

Duplessis

Requests the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education to:

- (1) Study the history of racism in the U.S., racism's effects on public education in La., and anti-racism education.
- (2) Submit a written report of findings to this task force and the House Committee on Education by Dec. 31, 2020.

Creates a task force to develop recommendations for implementing anti-racism education in public schools. Provides that the task force shall have 18 members and shall:

- (1) Meet twice monthly from January through June of 2021.
- (2) Submit a progress report, including recommendations for legislation, if any, to BESE, the state superintendent of education, and the House Committee on Education by March 15, 2021, and a final report to these recipients by June 31, 2021.