

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

BY SENATOR CATHEY AND REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the state Department of Education to encourage and assist any public school board identified as "financially at risk" to enter into cooperative agreements with other public school boards for the provision of essential services.

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:10.1(D) requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to define and identify any city, parish, or other local school board "financially at risk"; and

WHEREAS, the state Department of Education annually conducts a fiscal risk assessment of the prior year's fiscal activities of each public school board; and

WHEREAS, the review results in each board being identified "in corrective action", "monitor", or "no action"; and

WHEREAS, the May 2019 fiscal risk assessment report on the fiscal activities of 2017-2018 found 20 of the 175 public school boards with general fund balances of less than five percent and labeled "in corrective action"; and

WHEREAS, many of the systems "in corrective action" have operated with a deficit at least once in the last five years; and

WHEREAS, these systems are at risk of not being able to provide basic student services or meet their financial obligations; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:100.2 allows school boards to enter into multiparish compacts "to pool their resources, administrative, instructional or otherwise, and to allocate funds" for the improvement of education; and

WHEREAS, entering into cooperative agreements with other public school boards for the provision of essential services could reduce costs and increase efficiencies for all systems in the agreement; and

WHEREAS, any savings derived from such cooperative endeavors could be reinvested to help ensure continuous, robust student services.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the state Department of Education to encourage and assist any public school board identified as "financially at risk" to enter into cooperative agreements with other public school boards for the provision of essential services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the state superintendent of education.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES