

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 18

BY SENATOR FIELDS

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the state Department of Education to study the feasibility of banning the use of corporal punishment in public schools.

WHEREAS, R.S. 17:416.1 grants public school governing authorities discretion with respect to the use of corporal punishment and requires the governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school to adopt rules and regulations regarding the use of corporal punishment in the schools under its jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, "corporal punishment" is statutorily defined as "using physical force to discipline a student, with or without an object", and further states that corporal punishment includes "hitting, paddling, striking, spanking, slapping, or any other physical force that causes pain or physical punishment"; and

WHEREAS, at least thirty-one states and fifty-four countries have banned the use of corporal punishment and there is considerable research indicating that corporal punishment is not an effective deterrent to undesirable behavior; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics deems the practice of using corporal punishment in schools to be a noteworthy cause of aggressive behavior and mental health problems, as well as being detrimental to a student's academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, in response to the most recent state Department of Education survey, fifty-four of the state's seventy school districts indicated that corporal punishment is used in the schools under their jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, corporal punishment disproportionately impacts minorities and students from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, state law prohibits the use of corporal punishment to discipline students with exceptionalities; it is equally imperative that positive, supportive, effective, and less harmful means of disciplining students be identified and implemented as an alternative to corporal punishment.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the state Department of Education to study the feasibility of banning the use of corporal punishment in public schools.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state Department of Education consider the research and recommendations of the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline, created by R.S. 17:253, and consult with the council in conducting the requested study.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state Department of Education shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Education and the House Committee on Education not later than January 31, 2022.

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