

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 963

BY REPRESENTATIVE ORGERON

CURRICULA: Requires instruction in water safety for public school students

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:276.1 and 3996(B)(67), relative to required instruction in public schools;  
3 to require instruction in water safety for public school students; to provide relative  
4 to materials used for such instruction; to require public school governing authorities  
5 to adopt policies to implement such instruction; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Riley Bourgeois Act".

8 Section 2. The legislature finds and declares the following:

9 (1) Drowning is the number one cause of accidental death among children ages one  
10 to four and the second leading cause of accidental death in children under the age of fourteen  
11 in our nation.

12 (2) According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the  
13 third leading cause of death in children ages one to four in our state.

14 (3) For every child who dies from drowning, another eight children receive  
15 emergency department care for non-fatal drowning.

16 (4) There were twenty-four infant and child drownings in our state in 2020.

17 Section 3. R.S. 17:276.1 and 3996(B)(67) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

18 §276.1. Water safety; required instruction

19 A.(1) Age- and grade-appropriate instruction on water safety shall be  
20 provided to each public school student. Such instruction shall be incorporated into

1 an existing required course, such as health, physical education, or another course  
2 deemed appropriate by the public school governing authority.

3 (2) At a minimum, such instruction shall include instruction on the  
4 following:

5 (a) The proper use of flotation devises.

6 (b) Awareness of water conditions.

7 (c) The proper supervision of swim areas.

8 (d) Safe behaviors in and around the water.

9 (e) The importance of pool barriers and fencing.

10 (f) The importance of formal swim lessons.

11 (g) The importance of avoiding alcohol and substance use with water  
12 recreation.

13 (h) The importance of cardiopulmonary resuscitation for drowning victims  
14 and the importance of administering such aid.

15 B.(1) Each governing authority shall adopt policies necessary for the  
16 implementation of this Section.

17 (2) Each governing authority may customize the instruction for its student  
18 population based on geographic characteristics and any other special circumstances  
19 applicable to the school or school district.

20 C.(1) The state Department of Education shall establish and maintain a  
21 clearinghouse of instructional materials and information regarding model water  
22 safety curricula and best practices for water safety instruction.

23 (2) The department shall review the materials and information at least once  
24 biannually and revise them based on updated information, as needed.

25 §3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements

26 \* \* \*

27 B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and  
28 except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a  
29 charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this

1 Chapter and its approved charter and the school's officers and employees shall be  
2 exempt from all statutory mandates or other statutory requirements that are  
3 applicable to public schools and to public school officers and employees except for  
4 the following laws otherwise applicable to public schools with the same grades:

5 \* \* \*

6 (67) Water safety instruction, R.S. 17:276.1.

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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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HB 963 Original

2022 Regular Session

Orgeron

**Abstract:** Requires water safety instruction for public school students.

Proposed law requires public schools to provide age- and grade-appropriate classroom instruction on water safety. Requires such instruction be integrated into existing curriculum.

Proposed law authorizes each public school governing authority to customize instruction based on geography and any other special circumstances.

Proposed law requires the state Dept. of Education establish and maintain a clearinghouse of instructional materials and information regarding water safety instruction.

Proposed law is applicable to all public schools, including charter schools.

(Adds R.S. 17:267.1 and 3996(B)(67))