

2022 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 984

BY REPRESENTATIVE AMEDEE

SCHOOLS/BOARDS: Provides relative to school board meetings

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact 42:15, relative to school board meetings; to provide for agenda items
3 at certain school board meetings; to provide for general public comment; to provide
4 for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 42:15 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

7 §15. School board meetings; public comment; requests for agenda items

8 A.(1) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, each school board
9 subject to the provisions of this Chapter, except as provided in ~~Subsection B~~
10 Paragraph (2) of this ~~Section~~ Subsection, shall allow public comment at any meeting
11 of the school board prior to taking any vote. The comment period shall be for each
12 agenda item and shall precede each agenda item.

13 B.(2) The Orleans Parish School Board, at any meeting of the school board,
14 shall provide an opportunity for public comment subject to reasonable rules,
15 regulations, and restrictions as adopted by the school board.

16 C.(3) For purposes of this ~~Section~~ Subsection, a comment period for all
17 comments at the beginning of a meeting shall not suffice to meet the requirements
18 of ~~Subsection A or Subsection B of this Section~~ Paragraphs (1) and (2) of this
19 Subsection.

1 B. Each school board subject to the provisions of this Chapter shall provide
2 for a general public comment period during at least one meeting of the school board
3 each month that shall not be limited to specific items on the agenda for that meeting.

4 C. If at least fifteen residents of the school system file a written request with
5 the president of the school board for a specific item to be included on the agenda of
6 a meeting of the school board, the president shall include the item on an agenda for
7 a meeting of the school board held within sixty days of receipt of the fifteenth
8 written request for the specific agenda item.

9 Section 2. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
10 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
11 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
12 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
13 effective on the day following such approval.

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)]

HB 984 Original

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Amedee

Abstract: Requires school boards to have a general public comment period at a meeting at least once a month and provides a mechanism for residents of a school district to get an item on the agenda of the school board.

Present law (Open Meetings Law) generally provides that all meetings of a public body shall be open to the public, except those subject to certain statutory exceptions, and otherwise provides for notice, voting, and records of meetings.

Present law (R.S. 42:15) specifically requires each school board subject to the Open Meetings Law, except the Orleans Parish School Board, to allow public comment prior to taking any vote and requires that the comment period precede each agenda item. Requires the Orleans Parish School Board to provide opportunity for public comment at any meeting, subject to reasonable rules and restrictions adopted by the school board. Present law specifies that a comment period for all comments at the beginning of the meeting is not sufficient.

Proposed law retains present law and further requires each school board to provide for a general public comment period, during at least one meeting of the school board each month, that is not limited to specific items on the agenda. Further provides that if at least 15 residents of the school system file a written request with the school board president for a specific item to be added to the agenda of a school board meeting, the president shall include the item on an agenda for a school board meeting held within 60 days of receipt of the 15th written request for the specific agenda item.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Amends R.S. 42:15)