

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 31

BY SENATOR JACKSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To establish the Related Services Advisory Commission, within the state Department of Education, to study the level of supports statewide for students with special needs and exceptionalities through an examination of the ratio of service providers to students and the impact on service implementation.

WHEREAS, related services are the supportive services or activities necessary for some students with special needs and exceptionalities to maximize their educational outcomes; and

WHEREAS, any related service or support that helps a student to benefit from or achieve the goals set out in his individualized educational program should be provided by the appropriate related services personnel; and

WHEREAS, these related services, including but not limited to audiology, psychological services, social work services, and early assessment of disabilities in children, are critical and necessary and must be provided with the appropriate service provider to student ratio; and

WHEREAS, the current guidelines in use for related services come from best practices set decades ago and need to be updated to ensure each student with special needs or exceptionalities is provided the appropriate resources and tools, including the proper professionals in the field, to best assist the student to achieve his full potential.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby establish the Related Services Advisory Commission, within the state Department of Education, to study the level of supports statewide for students with special needs and exceptionalities through an examination of the ratio of service providers to students and the impact on service implementation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be comprised of the following members:

- (1) One member appointed by the executive director of the Autism Society of North

Louisiana.

(2) The executive director of the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, or his designee.

(3) Two members appointed by the president of the Louisiana School Psychological Association, one of whom shall be a graduate trainer in school psychology.

(4) Two members appointed by the president of Speech Pathologists and Audiologists in Louisiana Schools, one of whom shall be a graduate trainer in speech pathology.

(5) The statewide director of Families Helping Families, or his designee.

(6) Two members appointed by the president of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, one of whom shall be a graduate trainer.

(7) Two members appointed by the president of the Louisiana Behavior Analysis Association, one of whom shall be a graduate trainer in applied behavior analysis.

(8) One member appointed by the president of the Louisiana Association of Special Education Administrators.

(9) Two members appointed by the president of the Louisiana Occupational Therapy Association, one of whom shall be a school-based occupational therapist and one of whom shall be an occupational therapist graduate trainer.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the commission shall serve without compensation, except per diem or reimbursement of expenses to which they may be individually entitled as members of the constituent organizations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a majority of the total membership shall constitute a quorum of the commission and any official action by the commission shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of the quorum present and voting.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the names of the members chosen, designated, or appointed pursuant to this Resolution shall be submitted to the state superintendent of education by August 15, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall hold its organizational meeting not later than September 15, 2022, on the call of the state superintendent of education. At the organizational meeting, the commission shall elect a chairman, a vice

chairman, and any other officers as it finds necessary and shall adopt rules for its own procedure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission may seek input, information, and data from any persons, agencies, entities, or stakeholders that it deems necessary to fulfill the purposes of this Resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be domiciled in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but may meet elsewhere in the state. The state Department of Education shall provide staff support to the commission and may coordinate with and receive assistance from local nonprofit autism advocacy and support groups.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the commission shall study and make recommendations for legislation and policy affecting the education of students with special needs and exceptionalities. In carrying out the study, the commission shall:

(1) Collect data on the ratios of service providers to students in Louisiana public schools, including charter schools.

(2) Collect recommended ratios for successful service delivery found in the research literature and recommended by professional associations.

(3) Collect student impact information based on service provider to student ratios.

(4) Collect information on training programs available in Louisiana for providers of services for students with special needs and exceptionalities that are replenishing the field and any barriers to entering or completing the programs.

(5) Update the defined roles of each provider as well as how these providers can collaborate to work together for students with special needs and exceptionalities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall meet at least twice between the 2022 and 2023 Regular Sessions of the legislature and at least twice between the 2023 and 2024 Regular Sessions of the legislature.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall make a written report of its findings to the legislature, including submission of one printed copy and one electronic copy to the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library, prior to the convening of the 2023 and 2024 Regular Sessions of the legislature, together with any specific proposals for legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the state superintendent of education, the Autism Society of North Louisiana, the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs, the Louisiana School Psychological Association, Speech Pathologists and Audiologists in Louisiana Schools, Families Helping Families, the Louisiana chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, the Louisiana Behavior Analysis Association, the Louisiana Association of Special Education Administrators, and the Louisiana Occupational Therapy Association.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES