

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 315

BY REPRESENTATIVE CHARLES OWEN

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

STUDENTS: Provides relative to administration of public schools

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:264(A)(1), 266, 274.1(A), 281(G), 351.1(B)(3)(d)(i), and 381

3 and to enact R.S. 17:264(C), relative to the administration of public schools; to

4 provide relative to required instruction in public schools; to provide relative to

5 donations to schools; to provide relative to the diploma endorsement program for the

6 performance of community service by high school students; to provide relative to

7 textbooks and other instructional materials; to provide for effectiveness; and to

8 provide for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Louisiana Teachers'  
11 Relief and Education Reform and School District Reform Act".

12 Section 2. R.S. 17:264(A)(1), 266, 274.1(A), 281(G), 351.1(B)(3)(d)(i), and 381 are  
13 hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:264(C) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

14 §264. Community service; high school diploma endorsement program

15 A.(1) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education may

16 establish a "Distinction for Community Service" diploma endorsement program to

17 recognize high school students who perform a certain number of hours of

18 documented community service. Community service hours shall not count toward

19 academic course work or graded work in any public school. The number of service

1 hours required to earn a diploma endorsement shall be determined by the state board  
2 and shall accrue from the ninth grade through the twelfth grade.

3 \* \* \*

4 C. The community service performed pursuant to this Section shall not be  
5 related to political activities of any kind.

6 \* \* \*

7 §274.1. Civics and Free Enterprise; required; exceptions

8 A. Except as provided in Subparagraph (B)(1)(b) of this Section, all public  
9 high schools shall give instruction in Civics and Free Enterprise as a prerequisite to  
10 graduation. Instruction shall be given in accordance with the course of study  
11 prescribed by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education as provided  
12 in this Section. ~~The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall~~  
13 ~~prescribe suitable teaching materials for the instruction.~~

14 \* \* \*

15 §281. Instruction in sex education

16 \* \* \*

17 G. A city or parish school system may accept federal funds for programs  
18 offering sex education only when the use of such funds does not violate the  
19 provisions of this Section and only upon approval by the local school board. The use  
20 of such funds shall be approved annually by the school board in a public meeting at  
21 a time and place advertised by the school board at least two weeks prior to the  
22 meeting. The acceptance and use of federal funds for sex education shall in no way  
23 be construed to permit the use of any federally supplied materials that violate  
24 Louisiana law regulating sex education.

25 \* \* \*

26 §351.1. Textbooks and other instructional materials; review; adoption; procurement;  
27 distribution

28 \* \* \*

1 B.

2 \* \* \*

3 (3) The review process shall, at a minimum, provide for the following:

4 \* \* \*

5 (d)(i) The opportunity for parents and the public to view and submit  
6 comments on all textbooks and instructional materials under review. A copy of all  
7 ~~student edition~~ textbooks and instructional materials under review shall be made  
8 readily available online and in-person for this purpose. Reasonable safeguards  
9 against unauthorized use, reproduction, and distribution shall be provided.

10 \* \* \*

11 §381. Acceptance of donations by state and parish school boards

12 The ~~state board of education~~ State Board of Elementary and Secondary  
13 Education and the several parish school boards may, any school board, in accordance  
14 with the provisions of this Part, may accept and administer any donation that may be  
15 made to them for educational or literary purposes, and each board shall enumerate  
16 details of the contents of such donations in a document made publicly available on  
17 its website.

18 Section 3. R.S. 17:266 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

19 §266. Cursive writing; required instruction

20 A. Cursive writing shall be taught in all public schools. Each public school  
21 shall ensure that such instruction is introduced by the third grade and incorporated  
22 into the curriculum in grades four through twelve.

23 B. Each public school governing authority shall provide a written report to  
24 the state Department of Education each school year confirming the instruction of  
25 cursive writing as provided by this Section. The department shall compile the  
26 reports and submit a compiled report to the legislature no later than July thirty-first  
27 of each calendar year.

28 Section 4.(A) The provisions of Sections 1 and 3 and this Section of this Act shall  
29 be effective on August 1, 2023.

1 (B) The provisions of Section 2 of this Act shall become effective on January 1,  
2 2024.

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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 315 Engrossed

2023 Regular Session

Charles Owen

**Abstract:** Provides relative to public school administration.

Present law (R.S. 17:264) authorizes the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to establish a "Distinction for Community Service" diploma endorsement program for high school students who perform community service. Proposed law retains present law but prohibits the following:

- (1) Students from receiving academic credit for community service.
- (2) Political activity from qualifying as community service for purposes of present law.

Present law (R.S. 17:266) requires that cursive writing be taught in all public schools, including charter schools. Proposed law retains present law and additionally requires each public school governing authority to report to the state Dept. of Education (DOE) relative to the implementation of present law. Further requires DOE to submit a cumulative report to the legislature by July 31st each year.

Present law (R.S. 17:274.1) requires all public high schools to provide instruction in Civics and Free Enterprise as a prerequisite to graduation. Proposed law retains present law. Present law requires BESE to prescribe suitable teaching materials for such instruction. Proposed law removes this requirement.

Present law (R.S. 17:281) authorizes any public elementary or secondary school to offer instruction in sex education, provided such instruction is integrated into an existing course of study such as biology, science, physical hygiene, or physical education. Present law authorizes a city or parish school system to accept federal funds for programs offering sex education upon approval by the local school board. Proposed law retains present law and additionally requires the school board to approve the funds on an annual basis in a public meeting at a time and place advertised by the school board at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Present law (R.S. 17:351.1) provides relative to public review of textbooks. Requires that student editions of textbooks be made available online. Proposed law requires all editions of textbooks be made available online and in-person.

Present law (R.S. 17:381) authorizes BESE and school boards to accept donations for educational and literary purposes. Proposed law requires such boards to make details of such donations available on their websites.

Effective in part August 1, 2023; effective in part January 1, 2024.

(Amends R.S. 17:264(A)(1), 266, 274.1(A), 281(G), 351.1(B)(3)(d)(i), and 381; Adds R.S. 17:264(C))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

1. Remove the proposed law removal of requirement that BESE prescribe suitable teaching materials for instruction in free enterprise, an elective course for public high school students.
2. Remove the proposed law removal of authorization for sex education instruction to be offered in public elementary schools.
3. Remove the proposed law removal of authorization for sex education instruction to be offered at times other than the regular school day.
4. Remove the proposed law requirement that the legislative education committees review the implementation of the activities of the Quality Science and Mathematics Council.
5. Remove the proposed law abolition of the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline.
6. Remove the proposed law authorization for superintendents to waive instruction in adoption awareness, litter prevention and awareness, shaken baby syndrome, and parenthood education.