

2023 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 131

BY SENATOR BARROW

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. Requests the Louisiana Department of Education and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide specific information in a report to the Senate committees on finance and education relative to cameras in certain classrooms.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and the State Board of  
3 Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to provide specific information in a  
4 report to the Senate committees on finance and education relative to the installation  
5 and operation of cameras in certain classrooms.

6 WHEREAS, Act No. 456 of the 2021 Regular Session of the Legislature required the  
7 governing authority of each public school, including charter schools, to adopt policies  
8 relative to the installation and operation of cameras that record both video and audio in  
9 classrooms, upon the written request of a student's parent or legal guardian; and

10 WHEREAS, Act No. 456 defined "classroom" as a self-contained classroom or other  
11 special education setting in which a majority of students in regular attendance are provided  
12 special education and related services and are assigned to one or more self-contained  
13 classrooms or other special education settings for at least fifty percent of the instructional  
14 day and for which a parent or legal guardian has requested a camera to be installed; and

15 WHEREAS, Act No. 588 of the 2022 Regular Session of the Legislature required the  
16 governing authority of each public school, including charter schools, to adopt the policies  
17 by December 31, 2022, or within sixty days of the receipt of the funding for the installation  
18 of cameras, whichever occurred first; and

1           WHEREAS, Act No. 588 required the governing authority of each public school,  
2 including charter schools, to submit a copy of the polices, which must include provisions on  
3 how a parent or legal guardian may request the installation and operation of cameras in the  
4 child's classroom, to the Department of Education by January 15, 2023; and

5           WHEREAS, Act No. 588 also mandated that upon receipt of funding the governing  
6 authority of each public school, including charter schools, must install and operate the  
7 cameras; and

8           WHEREAS, Act No. 199 of the 2022 Regular Session of the Legislature  
9 appropriated eight million dollars payable out of the state general fund by statutory  
10 dedications out of the Special Education Classroom Monitoring Fund to the Non-Federal  
11 Support Program for cameras in the special education classrooms as provided in Act 456 of  
12 the 2021 Regular Session; and

13           WHEREAS, on May 22, 2023, at the meeting of the Senate Committee on Finance,  
14 public testimony was given stating that, "The cameras were not being installed and operating  
15 as the law required" and members of the committee questioned a representative of  
16 LDOE/BESE regarding the status of the eight million dollars that was appropriated for the  
17 classroom cameras and whether the funding is being used in accordance with the  
18 appropriation's intended purpose; and

19           WHEREAS, LDOE/ BESE's representative responded by advising the members that  
20 a formula was used to allocate the eight million dollars that was appropriated directly to the  
21 school systems and the charter schools, and that the money can be used only for the cameras;  
22 and

23           WHEREAS, the representative advised that the dollars were disbursed very quickly  
24 to the school systems and charter schools by either August or September of 2022 and that  
25 LDOE/BESE would provide the committee with a one-page report relative to the amount of  
26 funding that was allocated to each district and charter school; and

27           WHEREAS, the representative also advised that LDOE has requested eight hundred  
28 thousand dollars in the 2023-2024 fiscal budget for continued operating costs of the cameras;  
29 and

30           WHEREAS, a member requested that the representative of LDOE/BESE provide the

1 one page information by May 22, 2023, to no avail.

2 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
3 does hereby urge and request the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) and the State  
4 Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to provide specific information in  
5 a report to the Senate committees on finance and education relative to the installation and  
6 operation of cameras in certain classrooms.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall address all of the following:

8 (1) Whether LDOE received the school systems', including charter schools, adopted  
9 polices as mandated by R.S. 17:1948(A)(2), and if so:

10 (a) The name of each school system and the date the system's policy was received.

11 (2) Whether school systems, including charter schools, received an allocation of  
12 funds to install and operate cameras in a classroom as defined in R.S. 17:1948(B), and if so:

13 (a) The names of the school systems, the amount of funding each received, and the  
14 dates the funds were disbursed.

15 (3)(a) The number of school systems, including charter schools, that have installed  
16 and are operating cameras upon receiving the allocated funds as mandated by R.S.  
17 17:1948(E)(2) as of May 22, 2023.

18 (b) The name of each school system, including charter schools, the parish where the  
19 school or system is located, and the date of installation and operation of the cameras.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Education and the  
21 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall submit the report requested by  
22 this Resolution no later than June 1, 2023, to the Senate committees on finance and  
23 education.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report requested by this Resolution shall be  
25 submitted annually by February first beginning in 2024.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
27 state Superintendent of Education and the president of the State Board of Elementary and  
28 Secondary Education.

