

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 583

BY REPRESENTATIVE AMEDEE

SCHOOLS/CHOICE: Provides for school choice with respect to foreign language immersion

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a)(introductory paragraph) and (v), (b), (d), and  
3 (e) and to enact R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(g), relative to foreign language immersion  
4 programs; to provide relative to the procedure for parents to make requests to  
5 establish a new program; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related  
6 matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a)(introductory paragraph) and (v), (b), (d), and (e)  
9 are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(g) is hereby enacted to read as  
10 follows:

11 §273.3. Foreign language immersion programs; creation by local school boards;  
12 parent petition

13 \* \* \*

14 C.

15 \* \* \*

16 (2)(a) ~~Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a~~ A local school board, if  
17 requested in writing by the parents or legal guardians of at least twenty-five students  
18 seeking to be enrolled in kindergarten or of at least twenty-five students seeking to  
19 be enrolled in first grade who reside within the jurisdictional boundaries of the

1 school district, shall establish a foreign language immersion program for such  
2 students, provided that all of the following apply:

3 \* \* \*

4 (v) There is no existing foreign language immersion program offered by the  
5 local school board, in the same foreign language being proposed, that has been  
6 certified by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to ~~R.S.~~  
7 ~~17:273.2~~ R.S. 17:273.2, or the parents requesting the program submit in writing that  
8 the existing foreign language immersion program is geographically inaccessible.

9 (b) Such program shall be continued as long as at least twenty students  
10 remain enrolled in the program. If a program is discontinued in violation of this  
11 Subparagraph, the school board shall reimburse to the state Department of Education  
12 any funds that were provided to provide salary supplements to foreign language  
13 teachers through the minimum foundation program.

14 \* \* \*

15 (d) The local school board shall review the written requests submitted  
16 pursuant to this Paragraph and shall notify the parents or legal guardians not later  
17 than February ~~fifteenth~~ fifteenth, or fifteen days after receipt of the requests,  
18 whichever is sooner, of its determination as to whether or not the required number  
19 of requests was submitted. Parents who submit requests may appeal such  
20 determination to the state department. The state department shall make a  
21 determination on the appeal within fifteen days.

22 (e) The local school board shall inform the parents and legal ~~custodians~~  
23 guardians of all students enrolled in the school ~~system~~ system, in writing via mail  
24 and electronic mail, about the existence of any newly established foreign language  
25 immersion program within fifteen days of the determination that at least twenty-five  
26 requests were received pursuant to Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph and shall  
27 permit all eligible students to apply for the program during the designated enrollment  
28 period for the school year.

29 \* \* \*

1           (g) If a school board does not fulfill the requirements of this Subsection,  
 2           parents who submitted requests to the board may appeal to the state Department of  
 3           Education. The department shall make a determination on the appeal within fifteen  
 4           days. If the department finds the school board is in violation of the requirements of  
 5           this Subsection, the parents may pursue one of the following:

6           (i) Incorporate a nonprofit organization and request approval as a charter  
 7           school as provided in R.S. 17:3983.

8           (ii) Request that the administration of École Pointe-au-Chien as created by  
 9           R.S. 1977.1 et seq., open a campus in an area that can serve their children.

10          (iii) Request that a charter school with an immersion program open a campus  
 11          in an area that can serve their children.

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

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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 583 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Amedee

**Abstract:** Provides for a parental petition process for the creation of foreign language immersion programs for students in grades prekindergarten through 12.

Present law (R.S. 17:273.3) authorizes local public school boards to establish foreign language immersion programs. Requires a school board to establish such a program if requested in writing by the parents of at least 25 students seeking enrollment in kindergarten or at least 25 students seeking enrollment in first grade if certain criteria are met. Requires that such program be continued as long as at least 20 students remain enrolled in the program.

Proposed law retains present law and further requires that if the program ceases despite having 20 students enrolled, the school board shall remit minimum foundation program foreign language teacher salary supplement funds to the state Dept. of Education.

Proposed law authorizes parents who submit requests to local school boards to make appeals to the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Proposed law authorizes parents, if school boards do not fulfill the requirements of present law to establish a program, to request approval as a charter school or request École Pointe-au-Chien, L'Academie de la Louisiane, or a Type 2 charter school with an immersion program open a new campus in an area that can serve their children.

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

(Amends R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a)(intro. para,) and (v), (b), (d), and (e); Adds R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(g))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Remove name change of the International School in Lafayette to L'Académie de la Louisiane.
2. Remove narrowing scope of school from a world language immersion school to only French language.
3. Remove provision of governance of the school by a 16-member board of directors.
4. Remove expansion of École Pointe-au-Chien from a school for students in grades pre-K through 4 to also include grade 5.
5. Remove authorization for École Pointe-au-Chien campus locations outside of Terrebonne Parish.