
DIGEST

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HB 550 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Amedee

Abstract: Terminates approval of home study programs by the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education and provides for the authority of parents with respect to homeschools.

Present law provides for the approval of home study programs by the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Proposed law terminates BESE approval of these programs as of July 1, 2024, and instead provides for students enrolled in homeschools as follows:

- (1) Defines homeschool as a private course of instruction of a child directed by his parent through which a student may earn a high school diploma.
- (2) Requires parents, within 30 days of enrollment, to submit a one-time notification to BESE that includes the parent's name and address and the number of enrolled students.
- (3) Provides that parents are solely responsible for all aspects of the homeschool's educational program.
- (4) Exempts homeschools from present law applicable to nonpublic schools unless provided otherwise by law.
- (5) Provides that enrollment satisfies present law compulsory attendance requirements.
- (6) Provides for recognition of homeschool diplomas.
- (7) Applies present law relative to notification requirements for students who withdraw from public school to homeschool enrollment.
- (8) Provide that homeschool graduates may qualify for a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students award if they meet certain academic criteria and other requirements for initial award eligibility.

Proposed law applies present law to homeschools instead of approved home study programs as follows:

- (1) That nothing in present law relative to required kindergarten shall be construed to prohibit children from attending kindergarten at a homeschool.

- (2) The requirement that BESE provide by rule for homeschool students admitted or readmitted to public school.
- (3) That the prohibition on tobacco in schools does not apply to homeschools.
- (4) The prohibition against a charter school resulting from the conversion of a homeschool.
- (5) That homeschool students are eligible to participate in the Course Choice program.
- (6) That present law relative to learning pods does not apply to homeschools.

Proposed law repeals the following present law as applicable to students enrolled in approved home study programs:

- (1) The requirement that 11-year-olds and 16-year-olds provide satisfactory evidence of current immunization against meningococcal disease.
- (2) The requirement that DOE provide influenza immunization information to parents.
- (3) The requirement that DOE notify local school boards relative to home study applications.
- (4) The requirement that BESE provide by rule for the supply of textbooks to home study students.
- (5) Duplicative compulsory attendance provisions.

Effective July 1, 2024.

(Amends R.S. 17:151.3(D)(3), 221(E)(3), 221.3(B)(1) and (2)(a), 232(C), 236(A), 236.2(A), 240(D), 3991(E)(2), 4002.3(3)(c), 4036.1(F), and 5023(B)(5)(d); Adds R.S.17:236.1(H), 236.4, 5029(F), and 5062(C)(7); Repeals R.S. 17:170.4(A)(1)(c), 170.5(A)(2), 221(E)(1) and (2), and 351.1(A)(2))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Revise definition of "homeschool".
2. Add provisions for students withdrawing from public school to enroll in a homeschool.
3. Add that homeschool diplomas shall be recognized by state and local government agencies and by public postsecondary education institutions if students meet other admissions requirements.
4. Add that homeschool graduates may be eligible for a Taylor Opportunity for Students

(TOPS) award if they meet certain academic requirements and other requirements for initial TOPS eligibility.