

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 659 (HB 708)

2024 Regular Session

Freiberg

Existing law requires a charter school to meet a certain threshold with respect to the number of students with exceptionalities (other than gifted or talented) and economically disadvantaged students relative to its total student enrollment, as follows:

- (1) Requires that the percentage of the total number of students enrolled in the charter school who are students with exceptionalities (other than gifted or talented) be at least a certain percentage of the average percentage of students enrolled in the local public school districts from which the charter school enrolls its students who are such students. Prior law set this minimum percentage at 85%. New law lowers it to 70%.
- (2) Requires that the percentage of the total number of students enrolled in the charter school who are economically disadvantaged be at least a certain percentage of the average percentage of students enrolled in the local public school districts from which the charter school enrolls its students who are such students. Prior law set this minimum percentage at 85%. New law lowers it to 70%.

New law adds that if the aggregate student enrollment data for all of the charter schools located within a school system meet this enrollment requirement, every charter school located within the school system shall be deemed to be in compliance with the requirement.

Relative to charter proposals:

- (1) Existing law precludes the exclusion of students based on certain criteria. New law adds being economically disadvantaged to these criteria.
- (2) Existing law requires a description of how a charter school fulfills existing law purposes. New law includes consideration of how to serve the best interests of economically disadvantaged students in this requirement.
- (3) Existing law requires a description of a school's education program. New law adds how the program will meet the educational needs of economically disadvantaged students and students with exceptionalities to this requirement.

Existing law provides for admissions lotteries. New law provides additional lottery procedures including parental notification.

Existing law prohibits a charter school from requiring parents to disclose certain information (a student's medical information or special education needs) prior to enrollment unless otherwise required by law. New law adds income and economically disadvantaged status to this information.

Existing law authorizes giving enrollment preference to student with special needs when parents have disclosed such needs. New law includes economically disadvantaged students whose parents have disclosed this status.

New law further requires the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to develop rules for determining a charter school's compliance with application and enrollment transparency requirements, provide for a process to investigate allegations of discriminatory practices of a charter school, and annually produce a status report regarding enrollment percentages of economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities.

Effective August 1, 2024.

(Amends R.S. 17:3973(2)(b)(v)(aa), 3983(F)(1), 3991(B)(1)(a)(i), (3), (6), and (7), (C)(1)(a), (b), and (c)(i) and (iii), and (E)(6), and 3991.1(E)(2); Adds R.S. 17:3991(B)(1)(f) and (C)(1)(e)