

2025 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 234

BY SENATOR EDMONDS AND REPRESENTATIVE CHENEVERT

SCHOOLS. Creates and provides for the St. George Community School Board and school system in East Baton Rouge Parish. (See Act)

AN ACT

To enact R.S. 17:58.2(J) and 68.1 through 68.6, and to repeal R.S. 17:58.2(I) and 67 through 67.4, relative to school systems in East Baton Rouge Parish; to provide for the St. George Community School System; to provide for the establishment and geographic boundaries of the school system; to provide for the school board, an interim school board, and an interim school superintendent; to provide for board membership, apportionment, qualifications, method of selection, terms of office, filling of vacancies, compensation, expenses, powers, duties, and responsibilities; to provide relative to facilities and property; to provide relative to the collection and remittance of certain taxes; to provide relative to the provision of certain student services; to provide relative to certain applications for funding; to provide for the reapportionment of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board; to provide with respect to certain costs related to retired employees; to provide for effectiveness and for implementation; to repeal provisions of law with respect to the Southeast Baton Rouge Community School District which did not take effect due to the failure to enact an authorizing constitutional amendment; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

1 Notice of intention to introduce this Act has been published.

2 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

3 Section 1. R.S. 17:58.2(J) and 68.1 through 68.6 are hereby enacted to read as
4 follows:

5 §58.2. East Baton Rouge Parish School Board; reapportionment; election districts;
6 terms

7 * * *

8 **J.(1) In addition to any other requirements in this Section, in the event**
9 **the St. George Community School Board begins the actual operation of**
10 **educating students within its jurisdiction as a separate school system in**
11 **accordance with R.S. 17:68.1, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall**
12 **develop a plan to divide the parish, excluding the geographic area within the**
13 **boundaries of the St. George Community School System, into single-member**
14 **districts from each of which one member of the board shall be elected. The**
15 **districts shall be drawn with as equal population as possible, using population**
16 **figures from the most recent federal decennial census.**

17 **(2) Prior to the final adoption of the reapportionment plan, the East**
18 **Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall order a public hearing on the proposed**
19 **plan and shall cause the notice of the public hearing to be published in its**
20 **official journal, at least twenty days prior to the date of the hearing, and the**
21 **notice shall include all of the following:**

22 **(a) The time and place of the hearing.**

23 **(b) A general summary and map of the proposed reapportionment plan.**

24 **(c) The times and places where copies of the proposed map and**
25 **reapportionment plan are available for public inspection.**

26 **(3) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, each elected member**
27 **of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board who is holding office on the date**
28 **that the St. George Community School Board begins the actual operation of**
29 **educating students within its jurisdiction as a separate school system shall serve**

1 the remainder of the term of office for which the member was elected. If a
2 vacancy occurs during the member's term of office, it shall be filled in
3 accordance with law from districts in effect at the time the office is filled.

4 (4) At the next date on which a regular election for members of the East
5 Baton Rouge Parish School Board would be held following the date that the St.
6 George Community School Board begins the actual operation of educating
7 students within its jurisdiction as a separate school system, the members of the
8 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall be elected from single-member
9 districts adopted in accordance with this Subsection. The members so elected
10 and their successors in office shall serve four-year concurrent terms.
11 Thereafter, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall be reapportioned
12 as otherwise provided by law.

13 * * *

14 §68.1. St. George Community School Board and school system; creation;
15 membership; qualifications; apportionment; election; powers,
16 duties, functions; and system operation

17 A.(1) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, upon the
18 appointment of members of the interim school board as provided in R.S.
19 17:68.2, there shall be established a separate school system and school board for
20 the city of St. George within the boundaries of East Baton Rouge Parish. The
21 school board shall be designated as the St. George Community School Board.
22 The board shall be composed of seven members, one from each of the single-
23 member districts as provided for in Subsection B of this Section, who shall be
24 electors and shall meet the qualifications for office provided in R.S. 17:52.

25 (2) The geographic boundaries of the school system shall, at all times
26 relevant, be coterminous with the city of St. George.

27 B.(1) The interim school board shall, within one hundred eighty days of
28 appointment of the interim members, develop and adopt a plan of governance
29 and shall divide the geographic area encompassed by the St. George

1 Community School System into seven single-member districts and each district
2 shall elect one member to serve on the St. George Community School Board.
3 The districts shall be drawn in such a manner so that each member of the St.
4 George Community School Board represents the same number of persons as
5 nearly as possible, using population figures from the latest federal decennial
6 census.

7 (2) Prior to the final adoption of the apportionment plan required by
8 Paragraph (1) of this Subsection, the interim school board shall order a public
9 hearing on the proposed plan and shall cause the notice of the public hearing to
10 be published in its official journal, at least twenty days prior to the date of such
11 hearing, and the notice shall include all of the following:

12 (a) The time and place of the hearing.

13 (b) A general summary and map of the proposed apportionment plan.

14 (c) The times and places where copies of the proposed map and
15 apportionment plan are available for public inspection.

16 C.(1) The initial members of the St. George Community School Board
17 shall be elected at the time and place as provided by law and the election shall
18 occur prior to the date that the St. George Community School Board begins the
19 actual operation of educating students within its jurisdiction as a separate
20 school system.

21 (2) The initial elected members shall take office and their duties shall be
22 generally provided by law for elected parish school board members.

23 D. Vacancies on the board shall be filled as generally provided by law for
24 parish school boards.

25 E.(1) The organization of the St. George Community School Board as
26 well as the board's powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities shall be as
27 provided by law for local public school boards. Compensation for board
28 members and reimbursement for expenses shall be as provided by law for city,
29 parish, and other local public school board members.

1 (2) The St. George Community School Board shall adopt rules,
2 regulations, and procedures consistent with law to effectuate this Section and
3 to administer the duties, functions, and responsibilities of the board.

4 F.(1) The St. George Community School Board shall begin actual
5 operation of providing for the education of students within its jurisdiction on
6 July 1, 2027.

7 (2) Pursuant to the duty and responsibility placed with the legislature by
8 Article VIII, Section 1 of the Constitution of Louisiana to establish and
9 maintain a public educational system and pursuant to the authority granted to
10 the legislature by Article VIII, Section 10(A) of the Constitution of Louisiana
11 to enact laws affecting parish school board systems in existence on the effective
12 date of the constitution, all lands, buildings, improvements, facilities, and other
13 property having title vested in the public and subject to management,
14 administration, and control by the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board for
15 public education purposes that is located within the geographic boundaries of
16 the St. George Community School System or used to provide student
17 transportation services to such facilities, or both, shall be transferred to the St.
18 George Community School Board not later than June 30, 2027. Once
19 transferred, all property shall thereafter be managed, administered, and
20 controlled by the St. George Community School Board. The provisions of this
21 Subsection shall supercede any other provision of law to the contrary.

22 G. The St. George Community School System and the East Baton Rouge
23 Parish School System shall develop a transportation plan or develop a plan for
24 transferring school buses from the fleet owned and operated by the East Baton
25 Rouge Parish School System to the St. George Community School System.

26 H. The East Baton Rouge Parish School System shall provide extended
27 school year services through August 31, 2027, to public and nonpublic school
28 students residing within the geographic boundaries of the St. George
29 Community School System who qualified to receive such services prior to June

1 30, 2027.

2 I. The East Baton Rouge Parish School System and any taxing district
3 created by the East Baton Rouge Parish School System shall be the recipient of
4 all sales and use taxes levied for school purposes collected within the geographic
5 boundaries of the St. George Community School System and remitted by the tax
6 collector through June 30, 2027. Beginning on July 1, 2027, the sales and use tax
7 collector shall remit all sales and use taxes levied for school purposes collected
8 within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System,
9 including delinquent payments, to the St. George Community School System.

10 J. The East Baton Rouge Parish School System shall receive all ad
11 valorem and property taxes levied for school purposes that are collected within
12 the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System and
13 that are remitted by the tax collector through June 30, 2027. Beginning on July
14 1, 2027, the tax collector shall remit all ad valorem and property taxes levied for
15 school purposes collected within the geographic boundaries of the St. George
16 Community School System, including delinquent payments, to the St. George
17 Community School System.

18 K. With respect to students attending charter schools that are located
19 within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System and the East
20 Baton Rouge Parish School System , all of the following shall apply:

21 (1)(a) On July 1, 2027, the St. George Community School Board shall
22 assume the jurisdiction over the existing charter schools located within the
23 boundaries of the St. George Community School System that were authorized
24 by the East Baton Rouge Parish School System prior to the effective date of the
25 Act.

26 (b) An existing charter operator, at their option, may renegotiate the
27 terms of the contact with St. George Community School System or petition to
28 the Louisiana Board of Secondary and Elementary Education to become a Type
29 II charter after the effective date of the Act. If the existing charter chooses not

1 to renegotiate the terms of the exiting charter, then the terms of the charter
2 which were authorized by the East Baton Rouge School System prior to the
3 effective date of the Act shall remain in effect until the expiration of the charter.

4 (2) After the effective date of the Act, all applications for a new charter
5 school to be located within the boundaries of the St. George Community School
6 System shall be made to the St. George Community School Board or as
7 otherwise provided by law.

8 L. As required of all municipal and other school systems pursuant to
9 Article VIII, Section 13(D)(1) of the Constitution of Louisiana, no state funds
10 shall be used to discriminate or to have the effect of discriminating in providing
11 equal educational opportunity for all students.

12 M. The East Baton Rouge Parish School System and the St. George
13 Community School System shall enter into an agreement with respect to the
14 transfer of students between the school system that does all of the following:

15 (1) Allows any student who is domiciled in the city of St. George to enroll
16 and attend a school in the adjoining school system of East Baton Rouge Parish,
17 pursuant to R.S. 17:105.1.

18 (2) Provides that any student who resides within the boundaries of the
19 St. George Community School System shall be allowed to enroll in any charter
20 school located within the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, if the East
21 Baton Rouge Parish School System obtains permission from the State Board of
22 Elementary and Secondary Education to do so.

23 (3) Provides that any student who is living within the geographic
24 boundaries of the St. George Community School System shall be allowed to
25 attend any magnet program at a school with selective enrollment that is located
26 within the boundaries of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, without
27 regard to attendance zones, so long as the student meets the selective
28 admission's requirements and maintains the academic standards of the magnet
29 program.

1 (4) Provides that any student who is living within the geographic
2 boundaries of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System shall be allowed to
3 attend any magnet program at a school with selective enrollment that is located
4 within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System, without
5 regard to attendance zones, so long as the student meets the selective
6 admission's requirements and maintains the academic standards of the magnet
7 program.

8 (5) Provides that any new applicant to a magnet program or a charter
9 school shall not displace any student who is already on the waiting list to attend
10 that magnet program or charter school, regardless of where the student resides
11 in East Baton Rouge Parish.

12 (6) Provides that the school which accepts a student that is transferred
13 in compliance with the agreement shall receive the local per pupil and state
14 Minimum Foundation Program funds, pursuant to R.S. 17:105, so that the
15 money follows that student to the chosen school.

16 N. Except as provided in Subsection M of this Section, nothing in this
17 Section shall be construed to interfere or circumvent the rights of either school
18 system that are established by law as it relates to attendance zones.

19 §68.2. St. George Community School System; interim school board; interim
20 school superintendent

21 A. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, upon the
22 appointment of the members thereof as provided in Subsection C of this Section,
23 an interim school board shall be created for the St. George Community School
24 System and the board shall continue its service until the taking of office of the
25 initial elected members of the St. George Community School Board as provided
26 in R.S. 17:68.1.

27 B.(1) The interim school board shall be composed of seven members
28 appointed at large as provided in Subsection C of this Section. An interim
29 school board member shall have attained the age of eighteen, have resided in the

1 state for the two years preceding appointment, have been domiciled within the
2 geographic boundaries of the school system for at least one year preceding
3 appointment, meet the qualifications provided in R.S. 17:52, be an elector and
4 reside within the geographic boundaries of the school system.

5 (2) Membership on the interim school board shall not disqualify an
6 otherwise eligible person from qualifying as a candidate for election as a
7 member of the St. George Community School Board.

8 C.(1) All seven members of the interim school board shall be appointed
9 by the governor within thirty days after the effective date of this Act and shall
10 serve until the initial members of the St. George Community School Board are
11 elected, as provided in R.S. 17:68.1, and take office.

12 (2) Members appointed by the governor shall be from a list of nominees
13 provided as follows:

14 (a) The members of the Louisiana Senate elected from district numbers
15 six, fourteen, and sixteen shall each nominate three persons meeting the
16 qualifications for office for each position to be appointed by the governor.

17 (b) The members of the Louisiana House of Representatives elected from
18 district numbers sixty-five, sixty-six, sixty-eight, and sixty-nine shall each
19 nominate two persons meeting the qualifications for office for each position to
20 be appointed by the governor.

21 (3) A vacancy on the interim school board shall be filled in the same
22 manner as the original appointment.

23 D.(1) The interim school board shall constitute a body corporate in law.

24 (2) The organization of the interim school board as well as the board's
25 powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities shall be as provided by law
26 generally for city, parish, and other local public school boards.

27 (3) Members of the interim school board shall serve without
28 compensation.

29 E. The interim school board shall adopt rules, regulations, and

1 procedures consistent with law to effectuate this Section and to administer the
2 duties, functions, and responsibilities of the interim board.

3 F. The provisions of R.S. 42:11 through 28, relative to open meetings,
4 and the provisions of Chapter 1 of Title 44 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of
5 1950, relative to public records, shall be applicable to the interim school board
6 and its members.

7 G. All authority that is granted to the interim school board by this
8 Section shall expire upon the taking of office of the initial members of the St.
9 George Community School Board once the initial members are elected pursuant
10 to R.S. 17:68.1. However, the elected school board may take formal action to
11 continue the interim school board as an advisory body on matters previously
12 under the jurisdiction of the interim board.

13 H. The governor shall appoint an interim school superintendent who
14 shall serve until the elected school board chooses a new school superintendent
15 who shall meet the qualifications of R.S. 17:54.

16 I. The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall:

17 (1) Work cooperatively and collaboratively with the interim school board
18 and the St. George Community School Board to effect the transfer of the
19 students, buildings and other facilities, property, instructional materials, buses,
20 and all other assets related to the schools located within the geographic
21 boundaries of the St. George Community School System in an efficient and
22 expeditious manner.

23 (2) Provide the interim school board for the St. George Community
24 School System with immediate and complete access to:

25 (a) All school buildings and facilities associated with the schools located
26 within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System.
27 Such access shall include making the school buildings and facilities to be
28 transferred available, free of charge, to the interim school board or the elected
29 school board for the St. George Community School System for purposes of

1 conducting board and community meetings and other functions and activities
2 related to the operation of the St. George Community School System.

3 (b) All student records and any other student-related files associated
4 with students enrolled in the schools to be transferred to the St. George
5 Community School System.

6 (c) All financial records associated with the schools to be transferred to
7 the St. George Community School System, including those related to building
8 maintenance, taxes, insurance, and indebtedness.

9 J. The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board shall not:

10 (1) Interfere, or impede in any way, with the processes to transfer the
11 students, buildings and other facilities, property, instructional materials and
12 equipment, buses, and all other assets related to the schools located within the
13 geographical boundaries of the St. George Community School System to the St.
14 George Community School Board.

15 (2) Sell, transfer, or otherwise remove any asset or thing of value,
16 movable or immovable, corporeal or incorporeal, that is attributable to the
17 schools to be transferred to the St. George Community School System prior to
18 such transfer.

19 (3) Incur, transfer, or assign any debt or other responsibility or
20 obligation to schools to be transferred to the St. George Community School
21 System that is not properly attributable to such schools.

22 §68.3. Redistribution of Minimum Foundation Program to other school systems

23 To ensure that the creation of the St. George Community School District
24 does not have a negative impact on the minimum foundation program allocation
25 to school systems, beginning in the fiscal year of July 1, 2027, and continuing for
26 the next four fiscal years, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary
27 Education shall identify the districts in parishes other than East Baton Rouge
28 on which the creation of the St. George Community School System causes a
29 negative impact and determine the amount of the negative impact on the

minimum foundation per pupil allocation. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall withhold the total of the amounts of the negative impact on all districts in parishes other than East Baton Rouge from the total Minimum Foundation Program allocation to the St. George Community School District and transfer those funds on a per pupil basis to such districts.

§68.4. Unfunded accrued liability; payment

In the event that the establishment or the operation of the St. George Community School District results in the elimination of one or more positions of current members of the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System by means of privatizing, outsourcing, or contracting the service with a private employer, vendor, or by any other means, the St. George Community School District shall remit that portion of the unfunded accrued liability attributable to that position or positions pursuant to R.S. 11:1195.2.

§68.5. Benefits of reemployed retirees and Legacy Benefit Trust Fund for Retirees of East Baton Rouge Parish School System

A.(1) The East Baton Rouge Parish School System shall provide annually to the St. George Community School System an itemization of all postemployment benefits to be paid by the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board for the benefit of every individual hired by the St. George Community School System as a full-time employee.

(2) Utilizing the annual calculation method provided in Subsection B of this Section, the St. George Community School System shall reimburse, via the trust created in Subsection B of this Section, the East Baton Rouge Parish School System on a quarterly basis for all post employment benefits for all employees hired by the St. George Community School System as full-time employees until all post employment benefits to which the individuals are entitled has been paid in full.

B.(1) A trust to be known as the "St. George Schools Legacy Benefit Trust for Retirees of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System" shall be

1 established pursuant to R.S. 17:1224. Within twelve months of beginning
2 operation and then annually thereafter, the St. George Community School
3 System shall deposit into the trust an initial sum necessary to cover the amounts
4 that are required in this Section. The trust shall make quarterly payments to the
5 East Baton Rouge Parish School System in order to satisfy the requirements of
6 Subsection A of this Section.

7 (2) The annual sum to be deposited into the trust by the St. George
8 School System pursuant to Section shall be based upon the following:

9 (a) The amount which represents the total costs of providing the post
10 employment benefits for those individuals described in Subsection A of this
11 Section shall be divided by the number of students enrolled in the East Baton
12 Rouge Parish School System for the school year prior to July 1, 2027, thereby,
13 representing the per pupil amount of the total cost of the post employment
14 benefits. The per pupil amount shall then be multiplied by the total number of
15 students enrolled in the St. George Community School for the school year after
16 July 1, 2027, representing the amount of the payment to the trust.

17 (b) For the school year beginning on July 1, 2028, and for all subsequent
18 years thereafter, the amount deposited shall be the per pupil costs utilizing the
19 initial student enrollment data for the respective two school districts and the per
20 pupil formula applicable to the amount owed to satisfy the obligation provided
21 for in Subsection A of this Section.

22 C. In the event it is determined by an actuarial study that the funds on
23 deposit in the Legacy Benefit Trust for Retirees of the East Baton Rouge Parish
24 School System are sufficient to pay the costs of the legacy benefits due to a
25 proportionate share of individuals who retired from the East Baton Rouge
26 Parish School System prior to the date in which the St. George Community
27 begins the actual operation of educating students, St. George Community
28 School System shall not be required to make any additional payments to the
29 Legacy Benefit Trust for Retirees of the East Baton Rouge Parish School

1 System.

2 §68.6. Payments to East Baton Rouge Parish Educational Facilities

3 Improvement District

4 A. No later than June 1, 2027, the East Baton Rouge Parish Educational
5 Facilities Improvement District shall provide to the St. George Community
6 School Board a schedule of values for any construction completed within the
7 boundaries of the St. George Community School System with the proceeds of
8 Qualified School Construction Bonds issued prior to the effective date of this
9 Act, an accounting of payments made and to be made through the effective date
10 of this Act, on the construction bonds, and a payment schedule showing the
11 unpaid principal and interest due for the construction projects.

12 B. Beginning on July 1, 2027, the St. George Community School System
13 shall reimburse East Baton Rouge Parish Educational Facilities Improvement
14 District an amount equal to the percentage of the debt service paid in the
15 preceding fiscal year attributable to the construction completed within the
16 boundaries of the St. George Community School District. The reimbursement
17 shall be made to East Baton Rouge Parish Educational Facilities Improvement
18 District within thirty days of receipt by the St. George Community School
19 District of payment confirmation for the debt service attributable to
20 construction completed within the boundaries of the St. George Community
21 School System.

22 Section 2. R.S. 17:58.2(I) and 67 through 67.4 are hereby repealed.

23 Section 3. Any high school student residing within the geographic boundaries of the
24 St. George Community School System or the East Baton Rouge Parish School System may
25 elect to remain enrolled in the high school that the student was attending on the effective
26 date of this Act, until such time as the student graduates from high school. Such student shall
27 be included in the membership count for the school system in which he is enrolled for all
28 purposes, including state funding through the Minimum Foundation Program formula.

29 Section 4. Any school student in an elementary or secondary school that resides

1 within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System or the East
2 Baton Rouge Parish School System may elect to remain enrolled in the school that the
3 student was attending on the effective date of this Act for the two school years that occur
4 after the effective date of this Act. Such student shall be included in the membership count
5 for the school system in which he is enrolled for all purposes, including state funding
6 through the Minimum Foundation Program formula.

7 Section 5. This Act shall take effect and become operative if and when a proposed
8 amendment to Article VIII, Section 13(D)(1) of the Constitution of Louisiana is adopted at
9 a statewide election and which amendment authorizes the St. George Community School
10 System, as created in this Act or authorizes the creation of school districts by legislative act,
11 as a system to be regarded and treated as a parish and have the authority granted to a parish
12 school system as provided in Article VIII, Section 13 of the Constitution of Louisiana.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, 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)]

DIGEST

SB 234 Reengrossed

2025 Regular Session

Edmonds

Proposed law provides for the establishment and operation of the St. George Community School System and school board in East Baton Rouge Parish (EBR).

Proposed law will become effective and take effect if the legislature passes and the voters approve an amendment to the La. Constitution that authorizes the St. George Community School System. Provides that the geographical boundaries of the St. George Community School System will be the same as the city of St. George. Specifies that the St. George Community School System is to begin the actual operation of providing for the education of students within its jurisdiction on July 1, 2027.

Proposed law provides that, once proposed law is effective, an interim school board for the St. George Community School System is to be formed and all of the following are to apply:

- (1) The interim school board will consist of seven members who are appointed by the governor based upon the recommendation of members of the Senate and the House of Representatives who represent the geographic boundaries of the new school district.
- (2) Requires that an interim school board member must have attained the age of 18 years, have resided in the state for the two years preceding appointment, have been actually domiciled within the geographic boundaries of the school system for at least one year preceding appointment, and the school district at the time of the appointment. Has the ability to read and write, and actually reside within the geographic boundaries of the school system. Specifies that membership on the interim school board will not disqualify an otherwise eligible person from qualifying

as a candidate for election as a member of the St. George Community School Board.

- (3) Provides that a vacancy on the interim school board will be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.
- (4) Provides that the interim school board constitutes a body corporate in law, and states that the organization of the interim school board as well as the board's powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities are to be as provided by law generally for local school boards.
- (5) Requires the interim school board to adopt rules, regulations, and procedures consistent with law to effectuate proposed law and to administer the duties, functions, and responsibilities of the interim board.
- (6) Provides that the interim school board and its members are subject to the state's open meetings and public records laws.
- (7) Specifies that all authority granted to the interim school board by proposed law will expire when the initial elected members of the St. George Community School Board take office. Permits the school board, by formal action, to continue the interim school board as an advisory body on matters previously under the jurisdiction of the interim board.

Proposed law provides that, in the event that the St. George Community School Board begins the actual operation of educating students within its jurisdiction as a separate school system, the EBR Parish School Board is to develop a plan to divide the parish, excluding the area of the St. George Community School System, into single-member districts from each of which one board member is to be elected. With respect to the EBR Parish School Board's proposed redistricting plan, all of the following is to apply:

- (1) The districts in the EBR redistricting plan are to be drawn with as equal population as possible, using population figures from the most recent federal decennial census.
- (2) Specifies that prior to the final adoption of the redistricting plan, the EBR Parish School Board is to order a public hearing on the proposed plan and must publish the time and place of the hearing, a general summary and map of the proposed plan, and the times and places where copies of the proposed plan are available for public inspection in its official journal at least 20 days prior to the date of such hearing.
- (3) Provides that each elected member of the EBR Parish School Board holding office on the date the St. George Community School Board begins the actual operation of educating students within its jurisdiction as a separate school system will serve the remainder of the term of office for which elected. Provides that a vacancy occurring during such term of office will be filled in accordance with law from districts in effect when filled.
- (4) Provides that at the next date on which a regular election for members of the EBR Parish School Board would be held following the date that the St. George Community School Board begins the actual operation of educating students as a separate school system, the members of the EBR Parish School Board are to be elected from single-member districts adopted in accordance with proposed law. Provides that the members so elected and their successors in office will serve four year concurrent terms.

Proposed law provides that any high school student residing within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System or the EBR Parish School System may elect to remain enrolled in the high school he was attending on the effective date of proposed law, until such time as the student graduates from high school. Further provides

that such student will be included in the membership count for the school system in which he is enrolled for all purposes, including state funding through the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) formula.

Proposed law requires the interim school board, within 180 days of appointment, to develop and adopt an apportionate plan to divide the St. George Community School System into seven single-member districts from each of which one member of the St. George Community School Board is to be elected. Provides that, with respect to the proposed apportionment plan, all the following are to apply:

- (1) Provides that the districts are to be drawn in a manner such that each member of the St. George Community School Board represents roughly the same number of persons, using population figures from the latest federal decennial census, and that the districts are to be effective in time for qualifying for the election established by law generally for school board members.
- (2) Provides that prior to the final adoption of the apportionment plan, the interim school board must order a public hearing on the proposed plan. The interim school board must publish the time and place of the hearing, a general summary and map of the proposed apportionment plan, and the times and places where copies of the proposed plan are available for public inspection in its official journal at least 20 days prior to such hearing.

Proposed law provides that the governor is to appoint an interim school superintendent for the St. George Community School System who shall serve until the members of the school board are elected and the elected board chooses a superintendent as provided by present law.

Proposed law establishes that the interim school board is to be dissolved by the election of members of the St. George Community School Board and all of the following are to apply to the school board:

- (1) Provides that the St. George Community School Board is to be composed of seven members who are elected from single-member districts.
- (2) Requires that, in order to qualify as a candidate for the school board, the proposed candidate must meet the qualifications for office that are provided for in present law for all school boards. Specifies that each member of a local school board must be able to read and write. Provides qualifications relative to age, residency, and domicile.
- (3) Provides that each member of the St. George Community School Board is to be elected at the time and place provided by law generally for local school board members. Provides that the members of the St. George Community School Board are to be elected at least one year immediately following the effective date of proposed law and will assume office as otherwise provided by law generally for local school board members. Provides that such school board members and their successors in office are to serve for four-year concurrent terms. Provides also that vacancies on the board are to be filled as provided by law generally for local school boards.
- (4) Provides that the organization, powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities of the St. George Community School Board and the board members' compensation and reimbursement for expenses will be as provided by law generally for local school boards. Requires the school board to adopt rules, regulations, and procedures consistent with law to effectuate proposed law and to administer the duties, functions, and responsibilities of the board.

Proposed law, with respect to the property to be transferred from the EBR Parish School Board to the St. George Community School Board, provides that all of the following are to

apply:

- (1) Provides that on the date such actual operation begins and thereafter, all lands, buildings, improvements, facilities, and other property having title vested in the public and subject to management, administration, and control by the EBR Parish School Board for public education purposes but located within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System or used to provide student transportation services to such facilities are to be transferred to, managed, administered, and controlled by the St. George Community School Board.
- (2) The St. George Community School System and the EBR Parish School System shall develop a transportation plan or develop a plan for transferring school buses from the fleet owned and operated by the EBR Parish School System to the St. George Community School System.
- (3) Requires the EBR Parish School System to provide extended school year services, through August 31, 2027, to public and nonpublic school students residing within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System who qualified to receive such services prior to June 30, 2027.

Proposed law provides, with respect to property tax collections and funding for the St. George Community School System, that all of the following apply:

- (1) That the EBR Parish School System and any taxing district created by such school system is to be the recipient of all sales and use taxes levied for school purposes collected within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System collected that is remitted by the tax collector through June 30, 2027. Provides that beginning on July 1, 2027, the sales and use tax collectors are to remit all sales and use taxes levied for school purposes collected within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System, including delinquent payments, to the St. George Community School System.
- (2) Provides that the EBR Parish School System is to receive all ad valorem and property taxes levied for school purposes collected within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System and remitted by the tax collector through June 30, 2027. Provides that beginning July 1, 2027, the tax collector is to remit all ad valorem and property taxes levied for school purposes collected within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System, including delinquent payments, to the St. George Community School System.
- (3) Provides that as is consistent with La. Constitution, no state monies are to be used to discriminate or to have the effect of discriminating and failing to provide an equal educational opportunity for all students.

Proposed law provides that, with respect to the relationship between the EBR Parish School Board and the St. George Community School Board, that all of the following are required:

- (1) The EBR Parish School Board is to work cooperatively and collaboratively with the interim and elected St. George School Board to effect the transfer of the students, buildings and other facilities, property, instructional materials, buses, and all other assets related to the schools located within the geographic boundaries of the new school system in an efficient and expeditious manner.
- (2) The EBR Parish School Board is to provide the St. George interim school board with immediate and complete access to:
 - (a) All school buildings and facilities associated with the schools located within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System. Such access is

to include making the school buildings and facilities to be transferred available, free of charge, to the interim and elected school boards for purposes of conducting board and community meetings and other functions and activities related to the operation of the new school system.

- (b) All student records and any other student related files associated with students enrolled in the schools to be transferred to the St. George Community School System.
 - (c) All financial records associated with the schools to be transferred, including those related to building maintenance, taxes, insurance, and indebtedness.
- (3) The EBR Parish School Board will not interfere, or impede in any way, with the processes to transfer the students, buildings and other facilities, property, instructional materials and equipment, buses, and all other assets related to the schools located within the geographical boundaries of the St. George Community School System.
- (4) The EBR Parish School Board will not sell, transfer, or otherwise remove any asset or thing of value, movable or immovable, corporeal or incorporeal, attributable to the schools to be transferred to the St. George Community School System prior to such transfer.
- (5) The EBR Parish School Board will not incur, transfer, or assign any debt or other responsibility or obligation to schools to be transferred to the St. George Community School System that is not properly attributable to such schools.

Proposed law requires that the creation of the St. George Community School System is not to have a negative impact on the MFP allocation to school systems. Provides that beginning in the fiscal year of July 1, 2027, and continuing for the next four fiscal years, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) will identify the districts in parishes other than EBR on which the creation of the St. George Community School System causes a negative impact and determine the amount of the negative impact on the MFP per pupil allocation. BESE is to withhold the total of the amounts of the negative impact on all districts in parishes other than EBR from the total MFP allocation to the St. George Community School System and transfer those funds on a per pupil basis to such districts.

Proposed law provides that if the establishment or the operation of the St. George Community School System results in the elimination of one or more positions within the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System for specific reasons, the St. George Community School System is to remit funds for that portion of the unfunded accrued liability to the retirement system.

Proposed law provides that the St. George School system is obligated to reimburse the EBR School System for a percentage of the costs of the postemployment benefits, such as health insurance, for any EBR retiree that the St. George Community School System rehires. Requires that the annual payments are to be made via the "St. George Schools Legacy Benefit Trust for Retirees of the EBR Parish School System" that is established in accordance with present law. Provides that the percentage amount that the St. George School System owes to EBR is to be based upon the percentage of students that enroll in the newly created St. George School System from the prior year total of the students enrolled in the EBR School System. Provides that St. George is to make annual payments to trust and the trust is to make quarterly payments to the EBR School System. Provides that, in the event that it is determined that the funds on deposit in the trust are actuarially sufficient to pay the costs of the legacy benefits due to individuals who retired from the EBR Parish School System prior to the effective date of this proposed law, the obligation for St. George to make further payments to the trust ceases.

Proposed law requires that the EBR Parish Educational Facilities Improvement District provide to the St. George School Board, no later than June 1, 2027, a schedule of values for any construction completed within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System with the proceeds of Qualified School Construction Bonds issued prior to the effective date of proposed law, an accounting of payments made and to be made through the effective date of proposed law, on the construction bonds, and a payment schedule showing the unpaid principal and interest due for said projects. Provides that, beginning on July 1, 2027, the St. George Community School System is to reimburse the EBR Parish Educational Facilities Improvement District an amount equal to the percentage of the debt service paid in the preceding fiscal year attributable to the construction completed within the boundaries of the St. George Community School District. The reimbursement shall be made to EBR Parish Educational Facilities Improvement District within 30 days of receipt by the St. George Community School District of payment confirmation for the debt service attributable to construction completed within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System.

Proposed law provides that the EBR School System and the St. George Community School System shall enter into an agreement with respect to the transfer of students between the school district that does all of the following:

- (1) Allows any student who is domiciled in St. George to enroll and attend a school in the adjoining school district of EBR Parish, pursuant to present law.
- (2) Provides that any student who resides within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System shall be allowed to enroll in any charter school located within the EBR School System, subject to the approval of BESE.
- (3) Provides that any student who is living within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System is to be allowed to attend any EBR school magnet program, without regard to attendance zones, so long as the student meets the selective admission's requirements and maintains the academic standards of the magnet program.
- (4) Provides that any student who is living within the geographic boundaries of the EBR School System shall be allowed to attend any magnet program that is located within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System, without regard to attendance zones, so long as the student meets the selective admission's requirements and maintains the academic standards of the magnet program.
- (5) Provides that any new applicant to a magnet program or a charter school is not displaced by any student who is already on the waiting list to attend that magnet program or charter school, regardless of where the student resides in EBR Parish.
- (6) Provides that the school which accepts a student that is transferred in compliance with the agreement shall receive the local per pupil and the state MFP funds so that the money follows that student to the school of the parents' choice.

Proposed law provides that, with the exception of qualified students who are allowed to attend magnet programs or charter schools, nothing in proposed law is to be construed to interfere with either school systems' attendance zones.

Proposed law provides that on July 1, 2027, the St. George Community School Board shall assume the jurisdiction over the existing charter schools located within its boundaries that were authorized by the EBR School System prior to the effective date of the proposed law. With respect to charter schools that are located within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System, all of the following shall apply:

- (1) An existing charter operator, at their option, may renegotiate the terms of the

contract with St. George Community School System or petition to be authorized by BESE in order to accept students from both school systems. If the existing charter chooses not to renegotiate the terms of the exiting charter, then the terms of the charter which were authorized by the EBR school system prior to the effective date of proposed law are to remain in effect until the expiration of the charter.

- (2) After the effective date of proposed law, all applications for a new charter school to be located within the boundaries of the St. George Community School System shall be made to the St. George Community School Board.

Proposed law provides that any high school student residing within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System or the EBR School System may elect to remain enrolled in the high school that the student was attending on the effective date of proposed law, until such time as the student graduates from high school. Such student shall be included in the membership count for the school system in which he is enrolled for all purposes, including state funding through the MFP.

Proposed law provides that any elementary or secondary school student that resides within the geographic boundaries of the St. George Community School System or the EBR School System may elect to remain enrolled in the school that the student was attending on the effective date of proposed law for the two school years that occur after the effective date of proposed law. Such student shall be included in the membership count for the school system in which he is enrolled for all purposes, including state funding through the MFP.

Proposed law is effective if and when a proposed amendment to the La. Constitution is adopted at a statewide election that authorizes the St. George Community School System, as created in this proposed law.

Effective if and when a proposed amendment to Art. III, Sec. 13(D) of the Const. of Louisiana is adopted at a statewide election granting the St. George Community School System certain authority granted to parishes relative to a parish school system.

(Adds R.S. 17:58.2(J), 68.1-68.6; repeals R.S. 17:58.2(I) and 67-67.4)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill

1. Adds a requirement to remit funds for a portion of the unfunded accrued liability attributable to an eliminated position in certain circumstances resulting from the operation of the St. George Community School System, in addition to its initial establishment.