

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE BILL NO. 373

BY REPRESENTATIVE GUINN

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

STUDENT/SCH ATTENDANCE: Provides relative to prekindergarten instruction and age requirements at public and nonpublic elementary schools

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:24.8 and 222(C), relative to prekindergarten programs at
3 nonpublic elementary schools; to authorize certain nonpublic schools to develop and
4 offer prekindergarten instruction; to provide for the minimum age at which children
5 enter prekindergarten at nonpublic schools; to provide for rules and regulations; and
6 to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:24.8 and 222(C) are hereby amended and reenacted to read as
9 follows:

10 §24.8. Prekindergarten programs

11 A. Each city, ~~and parish, or other local public~~ school board may develop and
12 offer prekindergarten instruction. The youngest age at which a child may enter
13 prekindergarten provided for by this ~~Section~~ Subsection shall be two years younger
14 than the age required for that child to enter first grade as provided by R.S. 17:222(A)
15 ~~or, two years younger than the age required by the city or parish school board~~
16 ~~pursuant to R.S. 17:222(C).~~

17 B. (1) The governing authority of any approved nonpublic elementary school
18 may develop and offer prekindergarten instruction. The youngest age at which a
19 child may enter prekindergarten provided for by this Subsection shall be three years
20 old by September thirtieth of the year in which the child enrolls in prekindergarten.

1 (2) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation
2 with the Nonpublic School Commission, shall adopt rules and regulations to protect
3 the health and safety of three-year-old children who attend prekindergarten at an
4 approved nonpublic elementary school.

5 C. The goal of prekindergarten instruction shall be to improve academic
6 readiness, individual development skills, and social skills. Prior to implementing
7 prekindergarten instruction, a city, parish, or other local public school board and the
8 governing authority of an approved nonpublic elementary school shall set forth a
9 statement of the needs the program is intended to address, the anticipated results, and
10 the basis upon which such results are expected, an outline of implementation steps,
11 a detailed plan for staff usage, a detailed budget, and a plan for evaluation of the
12 program results and an explanation thereof.

13 * * *

14 §222. Age of school entrance; proof of age, race, and parentage required; exceptions

15 * * *

16 ~~C.(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections A and B of this Section~~
17 ~~and except as otherwise provided by Paragraph (3) of this Subsection, each city or~~
18 ~~parish school board, through the 1995-1996 school year, may adopt, by rule, and~~
19 ~~enforce ages for entrance into first grade in the schools in its system which vary from~~
20 ~~the provisions of this Section. All children admitted into school as a result of a rule~~
21 ~~adopted pursuant to this Subsection shall be counted in reports submitted for funding~~
22 ~~under the Minimum Foundation Program and money allocated pursuant to such~~
23 ~~program shall be based on the report which includes such children.~~

24 ~~(2) Beginning with the 1996-1997 school year and thereafter and except as~~
25 ~~otherwise provided by Paragraph (3) of this Subsection, each city and parish school~~
26 ~~board shall comply with the provisions of Subsection A of this Section relative to the~~
27 ~~age at which a child may enter the first grade of any public school at the beginning~~
28 ~~of the public school session.~~

1 (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections A and B of this Section,
 2 the parish school boards in Jefferson and Orleans parishes may adopt, by rule, and
 3 enforce ages for entrance into first grade in the schools in its system which vary from
 4 the provisions of this Section. All children admitted into school as a result of a rule
 5 adopted pursuant to this Subsection shall be counted in reports submitted for funding
 6 under the Minimum Foundation Program and money allocated pursuant to such
 7 program shall be based on the report which includes such children.

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)]

Guinn

HB No. 373

Abstract: Authorizes certain nonpublic schools to offer pre-K and provides that the minimum entrance age shall be three years old by Sept. 30 of the year of such pre-K entrance.

Present law authorizes public school boards to develop and offer prekindergarten instruction (pre-K). Proposed law additionally grants this authority to approved nonpublic elementary schools and provides that the minimum age for pre-K entrance at such schools shall be three years old by Sept. 30 of the year of pre-K entrance. Further requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Nonpublic School Commission, to adopt rules and regulations to protect the health and safety of three-year-old children who attend pre-K at such schools.

Present law requires public school boards, prior to implementing a pre-K program, to set forth a statement of needs the program is intended to address, the anticipated results, and the basis upon which such results are expected, an outline of implementation steps, a plan for staff usage, a budget, and a plan for results evaluation. Proposed law applies this same requirement to approved nonpublic elementary schools.

Present law (R.S. 17:222(A)) requires a child to be six years old on or before Sept. 30 of the calendar year in which the school year begins to enter first grade at any public school. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law (R.S. 17:222(C)(1) and (2)) provides for an exception to the first grade minimum age requirement through the 1995-1996 school year. Proposed law deletes present law.

(Amends R.S. 17:24.8 and 222(C))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill.

1. Deletes proposed law provision lowering the minimum age to enter public school pre-K from four to three.

2. Deletes proposed law provision requiring that a child be at least six to enter first grade at an approved nonpublic elementary school.
3. Provides that the minimum entrance age for nonpublic pre-K is three years old by Sept. 30 of the pre-K entrance year.
4. Adds requirement that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in consultation with the Nonpublic School Commission, adopt rules and regulations protecting the health and safety of three-year-olds attending nonpublic pre-K.
5. Adds provision requiring approved nonpublic schools to fulfill the same requirement as public schools relative to setting forth a statement of program details before implementing a pre-K program.