Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 69

BY REPRESENTATIVE NORTON

BESE: Requests that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education reconsider proposed policy changes relative to school libraries

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to reconsider
3	proposed policy changes relative to school libraries.
4	WHEREAS, as stated in the Constitution of Louisiana, the goal of the public
5	educational system is to provide learning environments and experiences, at all stages of
6	human development, that are humane, just, and designed to promote excellence in order that
7	every individual may be afforded an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential; and
8	WHEREAS, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has proposed
9	revisions to Section 1705 of Bulletin 741, The Louisiana Handbook for School
10	Administrators, that, if implemented, will eliminate crucial requirements pertaining to the
11	purpose, philosophy, and staffing of school libraries; and
12	WHEREAS, without these requirements in place, schools will face the possibility of
13	losing library staff, materials, facilities, and funding, which would be devastating to the
14	students and schools of the state; and
15	WHEREAS, if these proposed changes are implemented, among the eliminated
16	policies would be those that require that each school have library or media services
17	appropriate to the instructional levels and exceptionalities of its students and that the use of
18	funds for library services for exceptional students be at least proportionate to that expended
19	for regular students; and
20	WHEREAS, additionally, while the policy as proposed would retain the requirement
21	that each secondary school have a library and a certain number of librarians based on the size

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- of the student population, it provides that this requirement would "not apply to schools
 capable of providing resources and assistance to students through an alternate structure",
 which some may interpret as a loophole that allows secondary schools the option of not
 having a library or any librarians at all; and
- WHEREAS, school librarians play an indispensable role in schools throughout the
 state by providing vital educational services to students at every grade level that equip them
 to succeed in the twenty-first century learning environment; and
- 8 WHEREAS, school librarians design and carefully curate well-rounded collections 9 of print and nonprint materials that are tailored specifically to support each school's 10 curriculum, and they provide expert instruction to students on effectively accessing, 11 evaluating, and utilizing information technologies for educational purposes; and
- WHEREAS, school librarians cultivate learning opportunities that enable students to become proficient in their pursuit of information and educate students in terms of developing critical-thinking and problem-solving skills that are essential for college and career readiness and for citizenship and life; and
- WHEREAS, beyond their key curricular role, school libraries give each member of
 a school's learning community a venue for fostering lifelong learning and literacy; and
- WHEREAS, ultimately, it is in a library, more so than in a classroom, where a child learns to seek an answer to his or her own question–a skill that transcends the formal education environment and serves the individual throughout his or her life, and an education that does not nurture this skill is not a complete education; and
- WHEREAS, all students need and deserve quality school libraries run by qualified school librarians, and students who have access to school libraries that are well staffed and well stocked are more likely to succeed in school and in life; and
- WHEREAS, it is critical that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education reconsider the proposed revisions to policy pertaining to school libraries lest it should fail to fulfill the state's constitutional duty of affording every student an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential.
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
 urge and request the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to reconsider

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- 1 proposed changes to The Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators relative to school
- 2 libraries.
- 3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the
- 4 president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the state
- 5 superintendent of education, and the state librarian of Louisiana.

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)]

Norton

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Requests that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education reconsider proposed changes to The Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators relative to school libraries.