

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 763

BY REPRESENTATIVES ORTEGO AND GISCLAIR

SCHOOLS: Provides relative to foreign language immersion programs in public schools

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a)(introductory paragraph) and to enact R.S.
3 17:273.3(E), (F), and (G), relative to foreign language immersion programs in public
4 schools; to prohibit local school boards from denying enrollment in a foreign
5 language immersion program to certain students; to provide with respect to
6 requirements for the establishment, continuation, and certification of such programs;
7 to provide restrictions; to provide for an effective date; and to provide for related
8 matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a)(introductory paragraph) is hereby amended and
11 reenacted and R.S. 17:273.3(E), (F), and (G) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §273.3. Foreign language immersion programs; creation by local school boards;
13 parent petition

14 * * *

15 C.

16 * * *

17 (2)(a) Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a local school board, if
18 requested in writing by the ~~parent or legal guardian~~ parents or legal guardians of at
19 least twenty-five students seeking to be enrolled in kindergarten or of at least twenty-
20 five students seeking to be enrolled in first grade who reside within the jurisdictional

1 boundaries of the school district, shall establish a foreign language immersion
2 program for such students, provided that all of the following apply:

3 * * *

4 E. A local public school board shall not deny enrollment in a foreign
5 language immersion program to any student if all of the following conditions are
6 met:

7 (1) The minimum foundation program formula provides funding to local
8 school systems employing foreign language teachers to provide salary supplements
9 for such teachers at a level equal to or greater than the level of funding provided for
10 this purpose through such formula for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

11 (2) A sufficient number of foreign language teachers with the required
12 credentials as prescribed by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
13 are available through programs administered by the Department of Education and the
14 Council for the Development of French in Louisiana to accommodate all interested
15 students in the program.

16 (3) The student resides within the jurisdictional boundaries of the school
17 district.

18 (4) The student applies for enrollment in such a program by no later than
19 March first of the school year prior to such enrollment.

20 (5) If the student is entering second grade or above, he is sufficiently
21 proficient in the target language or is transferring from a certified foreign language
22 program in another Louisiana school district.

23 F. The requirements of Subparagraph (C)(2)(b) and Subsection E of this
24 Section shall apply to a foreign language immersion program established prior to the
25 2012-2013 school year. The local school board shall ensure that such program is
26 designated as a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program by the State Board
27 of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with R.S. 17:273.2 by not
28 later than July 1, 2017.

- 1 G. Nothing in this Section shall contravene any order of a court of competent
 2 jurisdiction providing for the assignment of pupils within the school system.
 3 Section 2. This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2014; if vetoed by the governor
 4 and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on July 1,
 5 2014, or on the day following such approval by the legislature, whichever is later.

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)]

Ortego

HB No. 763

Abstract: Provides relative to the enrollment of students in foreign language immersion programs in public schools.

Present law provides for the "Immersion School Choice Law" as follows:

- (1) Authorizes a local public school board to establish a foreign language immersion program in any school under its jurisdiction. The program shall be open to the enrollment of any student who resides within the jurisdictional boundaries of the school district.
- (2) Provides that, beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a local public school board, if requested in writing signed by the parent or legal guardian of at least 25 students enrolled in kindergarten who reside within the jurisdictional boundaries of the school district, shall establish a foreign language immersion program for such students if specified other criteria are met.
- (3) Provides that such program shall be continued as long as at least 20 students remain enrolled in the program.
- (4) Requires the local school board to ensure that any foreign language immersion program created pursuant to proposed law is designated as a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program in accordance with present law.
- (5) Provides that a local school board shall not be required to provide transportation to any student enrolled in a foreign language immersion program established that is located outside the attendance zone of the school the student would otherwise attend if providing such transportation would result in additional transportation costs to the school system.

Proposed law amends present law, item (2) above, to make it applicable to students entering first grade also.

Proposed law prohibits local school boards from denying enrollment in a foreign language immersion program to any student if the following conditions are met:

- (1) The minimum foundation program formula provides funding to local school systems employing foreign language teachers to provide salary supplements for such teachers at a level equal to or greater than the level of funding provided for this purpose through such formula for the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

- (2) A sufficient number of foreign language teachers with the required credentials are available through programs administered by the Dept. of Education and the Council for the Development of French in La. to accommodate all interested students in the program.
- (3) The student resides within the jurisdictional boundaries of the school district.
- (4) The student applies for enrollment in such a program by no later than March first of the school year prior to such enrollment.
- (5) If the student is entering second grade or above, he is sufficiently proficient in the target language or is transferring from a certified foreign language program in another La. school district.

Proposed law provides that, for a foreign language immersion program established prior to the 2012-2013 school year, the requirements of present law that require enrollment of 20 students for continuation of the program and that require enrollment of timely applicants shall apply. Further provides that the local school board shall ensure that such program is designated as a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with present law (R.S. 17:273.2) by not later than July 1, 2017.

Proposed law provides that nothing in present law or proposed law shall contravene any order of a court of competent jurisdiction providing for the assignment of pupils within the school system.

Effective July 1, 2014.

(Amends R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a)(intro. para.); Adds R.S. 17:273.3(E), (F), and (G))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Adds the following conditions on the proposed law prohibition on denial of enrollment.
 - a. Sufficient minimum foundation program formula funds to pay salary supplements.
 - b. Sufficient number of teachers with proper credentials.
 - c. Proficiency or transfer student requirements applicable to students entering the second grade or above.