

---

 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)]

---

Buffington

SB No. 657

Present law establishes the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program (LA 4), a program for early childhood development and enrichment activity classes. Requires the state Dept. of Education to allocate funding out of monies appropriated for such purpose. Proposed law authorizes any public or private entity, including a nonprofit organization, to make a directed donation to a participating school district for a student who is enrolled in LA 4 classes, as follows:

- (1) Authorizes private businesses, industry, foundations, charities, and other groups to make a request to the division of administration that they may create privately funded scholarship programs to make payments to participating school districts on behalf of qualified students.
- (2) Provides that if the division approves such a program, funds received by a school district from the program shall cause an equivalent reduction in the amount allocated to the district.
- (3) Prohibits the following:
  - (a) The interpretation of proposed law in a manner that would cause a school district to receive less benefits than it would have received.
  - (b) The construal or implementation of proposed law in a manner that would cause the loss of any funding for early childhood programs or services.
- (4) Provides that if a district receives scholarship funds, the annual appropriation of state funds for the LA 4 Program shall be reduced by the amount of such funds.
- (5) Requires the state treasurer to (a) deposit the amount of the reduction as specified by the commissioner of administration into the present law Overcollections Fund and (b) credit the deposit to an account within the fund created by proposed law and known as the "Program Participation Savings Account".

Effective July 1, 2014.

(Adds R.S. 17:407.26)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Finance to the original bill

1. Enacts new section of law for financial assistance relative to the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program.
2. Adds a new section to the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program that private businesses, industry, foundations, charities, individuals and other groups may request the division of administration to create a privately funded scholarship program to make payments to participating school districts on behalf of qualified students.
3. Provides that the new private scholarship program shall in no way be interpreted in such a manner that a participating school district would receive less benefits from the private scholarship than it would have from the

existing Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program had there been no private scholarship program.

4. Relative to the scholarship programs for the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program, provides that when an eligible school district receives private scholarship funds, the annual appropriation of state funds shall be reduced by the amount of the private scholarship funds so received. The state treasurer shall deposit the amount of the reduction as specified by the commissioner of administration into the Overcollections Fund and credit the deposit to an account in the fund known as the "Program Participation Savings Account".

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Adds that nothing in proposed law shall be construed or implemented in a manner that would cause the loss of any federal or other funding that a participating school district would receive for the LA 4 program or other early childhood programs or services.