

New law authorizes school districts and charter schools that provide instruction to high school students to offer a dropout recovery program for eligible students. Provides that the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's prescribed standards and achievement testing requirements apply to dropout recovery programs. Requires that dropout recovery programs make available appropriate and sufficient supports for students, including tutoring and career and college counseling, comply with federal and state laws governing students with disabilities, and meet state requirements for high school graduation. Requires each student enrolled in a dropout recovery program to have an individual graduation plan developed by the student's assigned academic coach. Specifies certain elements to be included in the plan. Requires that a student enrolled in a dropout recovery program be included in the student enrollment count for the school or school system offering the program. Requires monthly reporting by schools and school systems to the state Dept. of Education and specifies information to be included in the reports.

Authorizes school districts and charter schools to contract with an educational management organization to provide a dropout recovery program and if so, to ensure that the educational management organization is accredited by a regional accrediting body, the teachers provided by the educational management organization hold a current teaching license and the teachers of core subjects are highly qualified in those subjects, and the organization has provided one or more dropout recovery programs for at least two years.

Requires that dropout recovery programs be classified as alternative programs. Provides that entities that are contracted to provide dropout recovery programs may conduct outreach to encourage students who are not enrolled in a school district or charter school in La. to return to school. Prohibits such entities from conducting advertising or marketing campaigns directed at students who are enrolled in a school district or charter school, or undertake any other activity that encourages students to stop attending such schools in order to qualify for a dropout recovery program. Requires that contracts entered into by local public school boards for dropout recovery programs include requirements for the protection of all personally identifiable student information that comply with all applicable state and federal law and regulations.

Effective Aug. 1, 2014.

(Amends R.S. 17:221.4(A); Adds R.S. 17:221.6)