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## DIGEST

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HB 653 Engrossed

2015 Regular Session

Mike Johnson

**Abstract:** Provides relative to the applicability of the minimum requirements for instructional time in schools due to school closure for reasons of natural catastrophe or disaster.

Present law provides that the minimum school day for grades 1-12 in every public school shall consist of 360 minutes of instructional time and the minimum school year shall consist of 177 days of instruction. Authorizes school governing authorities to modify the total number of instructional minutes per day and instructional days per year under certain conditions, provided the same minimum total instructional minutes for the year is not changed.

Present law provides that such provisions shall not be applicable to any city, parish, or other local public school or school system that cannot meet the minimum requirements for any given school year due to school closure for reasons of natural catastrophe or disaster as certified by the state superintendent of education and approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in accordance with criteria established by the board pursuant to rules and regulations adopted for such purpose. Requires the school or school system to submit information explaining the reasons why it cannot meet the minimum requirements and efforts made by the school or school system toward meeting the requirements. Present law applies to an entire school system only if every school within the system is forced to close.

Proposed law removes requirement for BESE approval in order for the school closure to occur. Provides for approval by the state superintendent of the documented information required for submission. Adds requirement that BESE rules and regulations include a procedure for a school or school system that does not receive approval by the state superintendent to appeal to BESE for approval. Proposed law retains present law with respect to the applicability of such requirements to an entire school system if every school in the system is forced to close. Otherwise retains present law.

(Amends R.S. 17:154.1(A)(3))

### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the original bill:

1. Retain present law requiring certification of the catastrophe or disaster by the state superintendent and requirement for submission of relevant information to him.

2. Add that BESE rules and regulations include a procedure for appeal of a decision by the state superintendent to BESE.
3. Delete proposed law condition that the natural catastrophe or disaster be one for which the governor declares a state of emergency.