
DIGEST

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HB 372 Original

2016 Regular Session

Bouie

Abstract: Provides relative to the discipline of students.

Present law provides for the discipline of students for disorderly conduct in school or on the playgrounds of the school, on the street or road while going to or returning from school, or during intermission or recess.

Present law requires that a student in kindergarten through grade six removed from a class not be permitted to return to the class for at least 30 minutes unless agreed to by the teacher initiating the disciplinary action. Further requires that a student in grades seven through twelve removed from a class not be permitted to return to the class during the same class period unless agreed to by the teacher initiating the disciplinary action.

Proposed law changes the application of present law for grade levels of students in kindergarten through grade five and students in grades six through twelve, but otherwise retains present law. Present law additionally provides that the student will not be readmitted to the class until the principal has implemented one of the following disciplinary measures:

- (1) In-school suspension.
- (2) Detention.
- (3) Suspension.
- (4) Initiation of expulsion hearings.
- (5) Assignment to an alternative school.
- (6) Requiring the completion of all assigned school and homework which would have been assigned and completed by the student during the period of suspension.
- (7) Any other disciplinary measure authorized by the principal with the concurrence of the teacher or the building level committee.

Proposed law retains present law for pupils in grades six through twelve.

For students in kindergarten through grade five, proposed law also retains present law disciplinary

measures, but requires such measures only be implemented for serious offenses or as a last resort. However, prior to taking such actions for all other offenses, requires the principal to implement one of the following disciplinary measures:

- (1) Restorative justice practices using a school-wide approach of informal and formal techniques to build a sense of school community and manage conflict by repairing harm and restoring positive relationships.
- (2) Loss of privileges.
- (3) Peer mediation.
- (4) Referral to school counselor social worker.
- (5) Referral to response to intervention.

Present law requires, upon the third removal from the same classroom, the teacher and the principal to discuss the disruptive behavior patterns of the student and the appropriate action before the principal implements a disciplinary measure. Provides that a referral of the matter may be made to the building level committee. Requires a conference between the teacher or other appropriate school employee and the student's parent, tutor, or legal guardian prior to the student being readmitted.

Proposed law retains the requirement that a conference take place between the parent and teacher or other school employee, but removes the requirement that the conference take place prior to the student being readmitted.

Present law authorizes a school principal to suspend from school or suspend from riding on any school bus any student who commits certain offenses. Proposed law retains all such offenses specified in present law, but requires each school board develop and adopt rules and guidelines for suspension warranted by willful disobedience not later than April 1, 2017, for implementation beginning with the 2017-2018 school year. Further requires that the guidelines be developed in consultation with certain key stakeholder groups.

Present law authorizes suspension for disturbing the school or habitually violating any rule. Proposed law retains present law but further makes an exception that no student in grades kindergarten through grade five shall be suspended in-school or out-of-school for a school uniform related violation. Present law authorizes suspension for a student who is habitually tardy or absent. Proposed law retains present law but further makes an exception that no student in grades kindergarten through grade five shall be suspended in-school or out-of-school for such an offense.

Present law provides, upon the recommendation by a principal for the expulsion of any student, for a hearing to be conducted by the superintendent or by a designee to determine the facts of the case and make a finding of whether or not the student is guilty of conduct warranting a recommendation of expulsion. Provides that upon the conclusion of the hearing and a finding that the student is guilty of conduct warranting expulsion, the superintendent, or his designee, must determine whether such

student will be expelled from the school system or if other corrective or disciplinary action should be taken. Provides for the student to remain suspended from school until such hearing takes place. Provides that the student may be represented by any person of his choice at the hearing. Proposed law removes the provision that the student remain suspended from school until the hearing takes place. Further provides that every student receive such expulsion hearing within 10 school days of receiving notification of the recommendation for expulsion. Provides that if a hearing is not conducted within 10 school days after the incident, then the student must return to school or begin receiving educational services at an alternative setting until the hearing takes place. Provides that the parent or legal guardian may also be represented by a person of choice.

Present law provides generally for the powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities of public school boards. Proposed law additionally requires the publication of student discipline policies and procedures on school board websites, including charter schools. Provides that each city, parish, and other local public school board that maintains a website shall publish on it certain information relative to student discipline and other matters in an easily understandable format. Provides definitions and provides that such information shall include:

- (1) Disciplinary action processes and procedures applicable to students.
- (2) The school board's policies and procedures.
- (3) Minutes of school board meetings required to be made available to the public.
- (4) Directory of schools and contact information.
- (5) School calendars, including the beginning and end of each school year, staff days, conference days, testing days, application-specific dates, report card release dates, early release days, and holidays.

(Amends R.S. 17:416(A)(1)(c)(iii) and (v),(2)(a) and (b), and (3)(a)(i), (vii) and (xvi) and (C)(1); Adds R.S. 17:416(A)(1)(c)(viii), 416.22, and 3996(B)(13))