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## DIGEST

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HB 887 Original

2016 Regular Session

Steve Carter

**Abstract:** Creates an independent, residential school (Thrive Academy) in Baton Rouge as a pilot school for certain at-risk students in grades six through 12; provides for a board of directors for the school; provides for funding.

Proposed law establishes an independent, residential school (Thrive Academy) in Baton Rouge as a pilot school for certain at-risk students in grades six through 12. Provides for the enrollment of "at-risk" students who meet at least one of the following:

- (1) Is eligible for health benefits under Medicaid.
- (2) Is in the eighth grade or below and is reading two or more grade levels below grade level as determined by any test required pursuant to present law.
- (3) Has a documented history of truancy.
- (4) Is in foster care pursuant to placement through the Dept. of Children and Family Services.
- (5) Meets the criteria for a homeless student as defined in the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- (6) Is referred by a teacher, counselor, or principal.

Proposed law provides for a board of directors for the school and provides for membership and terms. Provides that the members shall not receive any compensation. Provides for powers and duties of the board including but not limited to adopting necessary rules, regulations, and policies for the operation of the school, annually preparing and adopting a formula to adequately fund the educational programs at the school, awarding certificates and issuing diplomas, determining student eligibility, and selecting a director for the school.

Proposed law provides that the director shall be the chief administrative officer and shall administer the rules, regulations, and policies adopted by the board. The director shall be responsible for all the administrative functions, duties, and needs of the board including but not limited to preparing an annual budget, exercising budgetary responsibility and allocating funds appropriated for the school, developing a student handbook, and determining faculty and staff positions.

Proposed law requires the board to create an advisory panel to advise and provide assistance to the

board on matters affecting the school as determined by the board. Provides for panel membership to consist of a representative from each local public school system that has entered into an agreement with the board for the enrollment of a student who otherwise would have attended school in the local public school system.

Proposed law provides that funding for the school shall come from legislative appropriation made directly to the school from the state general fund and through funds appropriated for the minimum foundation program and allocated to the school by the state Dept. of Education. Permits the board to accept federal and private funds. Specifies that the minimum foundation program funds allocated to the school shall be based upon the school's enrollment, which shall be determined in the same manner as for other public schools and the amount allocated shall be equal to the per pupil amount provided through the minimum foundation program formula including both the state and local per pupil weighted allocations based on student characteristics or needs.

Proposed law provides that the school shall offer extracurricular activities. Provides that the East Baton Rouge Parish public school system shall, to the extent practicable, allow the students of the school to participate in any extracurricular activities the system may offer which the school cannot. Further provides that students shall be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity at a nonpublic school that is located within the attendance zone of the school provided that such nonpublic school is approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Proposed law provides that the school shall be subject to the same laws, rules, regulations, and other requirements applicable to charter schools and traditional public schools as specifically provided for in present law (relative to charter schools).

(Adds R.S. 17:1971-1976 and R.S. 36:651(D)(9))