

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2023 Regular Session
October 26, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Lance Harris, chair of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:43 a.m. in Room 5, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Lance Harris, chairman
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Kendricks "Ken" Brass
Representative Julie Emerson
Representative Aimee Adatto Freeman
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Brett F. Geymann
Representative Patrick O. Jefferson, vice chairman
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Tammy T. Phelps
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elizabeth L. Borne, legislative analyst
Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst
Alexandra Cravins, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. BUSINESS

Pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, conduct a hearing on the rules for an appeals process for certain students who do not meet high school graduation requirements as contained in revisions to Bulletin 741 as proposed by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Holly Boffy, 114 Jenny Lane, Lafayette, LA 70508, spoke in support of Bulletin 741 and presented a PowerPoint, "Expanded Criteria to Graduation for Every Learner in Louisiana", Exhibit A, and provided the following handouts, which are included in the committee records:

- "Louisiana Department of Education Graduation Appeal Option Guidance", Exhibit B.
- "EXCELL Appeal Process Policy Brief", Exhibit C.

Dr. Cade Brumley, Louisiana Department of Education, no address provided, spoke for information only on Bulletin 741.

James Garvey, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education District 1, 4800 Beau Lac Lane, Metairie, LA, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Chairman Harris announced that the committee would observe a five-minute rule for presenters and speakers.

Ronnie Morris, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education District 6, 1455 Saint Albans Drive, no city or state provided, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741 and provided the following handouts which are included in the committee records:

- "Examples of A.I. Completing Algebra Questions", Exhibit D.
- "More Examples of A.I. Completing Algebra Questions", Exhibit E.
- "Louisiana Department of Education Assessment Guide for Algebra I", Exhibit F.

Michael Melerine, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education District 4, no address provided, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Belinda Davis, 4540 Hyacinth Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Chairman Harris announced that the committee would observe a three-minute rule for presenters and speakers.

Cynthia Posey, Louisiana Federation of Teachers, 9623 Brookline Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Taylor Castillo, Our Voice Nuestra Voz, 900 Camp Street, Suite 359, New Orleans, LA 70130, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Dr. Erin Atkins, Lafayette Parish School System and Acadiana High School, 401 Presbytere Parkway, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Marcus Thomas, Louisiana Association of Educators, 8322 One Calais Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Elizabeth Ostberg, Educators for Quality Alternatives, 1614 Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard, no city or state provided, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Cheruba Sophia Chavez, Excell Coalition, 415 North Prieur Street, New Orleans, LA 70112, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Emma Merrill, Excell Coalition, 1812 Seventh Street, New Orleans, LA 70115, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Anna West, Humanities Amped and Tara High School, 5715 North Afton Parkway, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Genesis Gutierrez Morales, Tara High School, no address provided, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Thereza Garcia, Tara High School, 4367 Debellvue Drive, no city or state provided, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Mauricio Velueta Hernandez, Tara High School, 2245 College Drive, no city or state provided, spoke in support of Bulletin 741 and presented testimony on behalf of Sofia Pima, no witness card provided, Exhibit G, which is included in the committee records.

Layne Edelman, 623 Bellevue Plantation Road, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Renita Williams Thomas, 17408 Old Scenic Highway, Zachary, LA 70791, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Monica Owens, Louisiana Key Academy, no address provided, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Dr. Jaleesa Thompson, Coach on the Geaux Consulting, 8273 Quiet Creek Drive, Denham Springs, LA 70726, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

Angela Ramirez, no address provided, spoke in support of Bulletin 741.

David Stokes, 36513 Carlino Court, Prairieville, LA 70769, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741 and presented a video from U.S. Senator John Kennedy in opposition to Bulletin 741. Mr. Stokes read a letter from Senator John Kennedy, no witness card provided, Exhibit H, which is included in the committee records.

Dr. Erin Bendily, Pelican Institute, 400 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70130, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Brian Davis, Louisiana Association of Business & Industry, 500 Main Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Kelli Bottger, Louisiana Kids Matter, 37397 Cypress Alley Avenue, Gonzales, LA 70737, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Barry Erwin, Council For A Better Louisiana, P.O. Box 4308, Baton Rouge, LA 70821, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Millie Harris, Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy, 475 Manhattan Boulevard, Harvey, LA, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

David Pearce, 5343 North Afton Pkwy, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Cathy Banks, 5 Par Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70605, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Brigitte Nieland, 2225 Kleinert Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Corhonda Corley, Louisiana Families of Individuals with Disabilities, 8815 Wilmore Drive, Zachary, LA 70791, spoke in opposition to Bulletin 741.

Representative Emerson read a letter from Attorney General Jeff Landry, no witness card provided, Exhibit I, which was distributed to committee members prior to the meeting and is included in the committee records.

Thomas Lambert, no witness card provided, spoke for information only on Bulletin 741.

Representative Harris offered a motion to find the proposed rule change regarding an appeals process for high school graduation assessment requirements as contained in Bulletin 741 unacceptable to the committee, to which Representative Freeman objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the motion passed by a vote of 8 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass,

Emerson, Freiberg, Charles Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea. Representatives Freeman, Jefferson, and Phelps voted nay.

Representative Freeman offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Harris, Amedée, Brass, Emerson, Freeman, Freiberg, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support, and 5 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Bulletin 741 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Lance Harris
House Committee on Education

Date adopted:

The committee has acknowledged on ____, 2025 that these minutes were prepared in accordance with the rules of the House of Representatives.