

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
March 27, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair
Representative Beryl A. Amedée, vice chair
Representative Kendrick "Ken" Brass
Representative Josh Carlson
Representative Barbara W. Carpenter
Representative Kim Carver
Representative Kathy Edmonston
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Michael Melerine
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver
Representative Sylvia Elaine Taylor
Representative Rashid Armand Young

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Elizabeth Douglas, sergeant at arms

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. BUSINESS**House Bill No. 728 by Representative Davis**

Representative Davis presented House Bill No. 728, which provides relative to initial eligibility requirements for the M.J. Foster Promise Program.

Brace Trey Godfrey, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, 564 Laurel Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Bill No. 728.

Sujuan Boutte, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance, 602 North Fifth Street, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 728.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 728 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 728 was reported favorably by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 14 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 45 by Representative Mike Johnson

Representative Mike Johnson presented House Bill No. 45, which provides relative to the certification of Montessori teachers.

Representative Amedée offered a motion to report House Bill No. 45 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 45 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows 2 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 456 by Representative Davis

Representative Davis presented House Bill No. 456, which provides relative to the administration of medication at school.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 456 that : (1) Added a requirement that the state Department of Education develop and distribute a list of life-saving medications; and (2) Added that training in the administration of such medications may be provided by a medical emergency training organization, a registered nurse, or a licensed physician. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Dr. Alice Hoyt, Code Ana and Hoyt Institute of Food Allergy, 123 Metairie Road, Suite 203, Metairie, LA 70005, spoke in support of House Bill No. 456.

Sarah Jane Lowry, Code Ana, 1407 Napoleon Avenue, Apartment E, New Orleans, LA 70115, spoke in support of House Bill No. 456.

Representative Schlegel offered a motion to report House Bill No. 456 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 456 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 7 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 264 by Representative Hughes

Representative Hughes presented House Bill No. 264, which adds computer science as a high school graduation requirement and requires teacher preparation programs to include computer science education. Representative Hughes provided a handout, "Louisiana Computer Science Education Advancement Act Fact Sheet", Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 264 that:

1. Authorized teacher prep instruction on teaching students computer science to be incorporated into an existing course of study.
2. Regarding qualifying for a TOPS Award, added an option for one unit of a foreign language and one unit of computer science, rather than requiring two units of either one.

3. Delayed implementation of the requirement that public high schools provide computer science instruction until the 2026-2027 school year.
4. Required the state Department of Education to approve the computer science courses offered to public school students.

Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yeas.

Anthony Owen, National Computer Science Advocacy Coalition, 4501 Lexington Park, Bryant, AR 72022, spoke in support of House Bill No. 264.

Dave Brown, Computer Science Forward, 195 Page Mill, Palo Alto, CA 94306, spoke in support of House Bill No. 264.

Jessica Vallelungo, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 264.

Ben Lemoine, Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1201 North Third Street, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 264.

Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, 2713 Indian Mound Boulevard, Monroe, LA 71201, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 264.

Dr. Susannah Craig, Louisiana Board of Regents, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 6-200, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 264.

Ashley Townsend, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 264.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report House Bill No. 264 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 264 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yeas.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 10 in support, and 1 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 46 by Representative Edmonston

Representative Edmonston presented House Bill No. 46, which provides that no person shall be required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of enrollment or attendance at any public or nonpublic school.

Ellen Palmintier, Tulane University, 1555 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70112, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 46.

Jill Hines, Health Freedom Louisiana, 3301 Seventeenth Street, #7443, Metairie, LA 70010, spoke in support of House Bill No. 46.

Dr. Kathleen Willis, 42386 Forest View Place, Ponchatoula, LA 70454, spoke in support of House Bill No. 46.

J. Christopher Alexander, Louisiana Citizen Advocacy Group, P.O. Box 64952, Baton Rouge, LA 70896, spoke in support of House Bill No. 46.

Jennifer Herricks, Ph.D., Louisiana Families for Vaccines, 3433 Highway 190, PMB 233, Mandeville, LA 70471, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 46.

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to report House Bill No. 46 favorably, to which Representative Taylor objected. The committee administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 46 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 1 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Young voted yea. Representative Taylor voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 10 in support, and 6 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 46 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 47 by Representative Edmonston

Representative Edmonston presented House Bill No. 47, which requires that communication issued about immunization requirements include exemption information and applies exemptions not only to students seeking to enter school but also to students attending school.

Jill Hines, Health Freedom Louisiana, 3301 Seventeenth Street, #7443, Metairie, LA 70010, spoke in support of House Bill No. 47 and provided a handout, "Louisiana Schools vaccination requirements", Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Christy Halk, Republican Party Executive Committee, District 7, 1377 Steele Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 47.

Dr. Kathleen Willis, 42386 Forest View Place, Ponchatoula, LA 70454, spoke in support of House Bill No. 47.

Jennifer Herricks, Ph.D., Louisiana Families for Vaccines, 3433 Highway 190, PMB 233, Mandeville, LA 70471, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 47.

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to report House Bill No. 47 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 47 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 10 in support, and 6 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 47 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 647 by Representative Romero

Representative Romero presented House Bill No. 647, which provides relative to student instruction requirements.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 647 that: (1) Required the Department of Education to maintain a list of instructional requirements rather than establishing and maintaining a database for this purpose; and (2) Removed the provision that effectiveness of requirements is contingent on State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approval. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 14 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Sarah Vandergriff, Louisiana Charter Schools, 4722 Miles Drive, New Orleans, LA 70122, spoke in support of House Bill No. 647.

Representative Tarver offered a motion to report House Bill No. 647 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 647 was reported with amendments by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 600 by Representative Carpenter

Representative Carpenter presented House Bill No. 600, which provides relative to sick leave banks for teachers, bus operators, and other school employees.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 600 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 600 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Carlson offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Laurie Schlegel
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: