

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2024 Regular Session
April 4, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:05 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

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. BUSINESS

House Bill No. 71 by Representative Horton

Representative Horton presented House Bill No. 71, which requires the display of the Ten Commandments in public schools.

Louisiana State Senator J. Adam Bass, District 36, spoke in support of House Bill No. 71.

Ronald Hackenberg, Pacific Justice Institute, P.O. Box 2005, Ocean Springs, MS, spoke in support of House Bill No. 71.

Elijah O'Neal, American Journey Experience, no address provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 71.

Mary Susie Labry, 40128B Emerald Drive, Ponchatoula, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 71.

Chad Landry, no address provided, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 71.

Jacob Newsom, 1688 Tudor Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 71.

Melissa Flournoy, 10,000 Women, 650 North Sixth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 71.

Tia LeBrun, 105 Hermitage Avenue, Lafayette, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 71.

Bruce Reilly, VOTE, 4930 Washington Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 71.

Representative Taylor offered a motion to report House Bill No. 71 favorably, to which Representative Carpenter objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 71 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea. Representatives Brass, Carpenter, and Freiberg voted nay.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support, and 7 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 71 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 322 by Representative Stagni

Representative Stagni presented House Bill No. 322, which provides relative to student discipline.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 322 that specified that the proposed law prohibition on adverse employment action against a teacher for taking disciplinary action is limited to when teachers take action in accordance with public school governing authority policy, and specified that teachers are not authorized to violate the public school governing authority discipline policy in the exercise of their rights. 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, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Cynthia Posey, Louisiana Federation of Teachers, 9623 Brookline Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of House Bill No. 322.

Sandra Hauer, Jefferson Parish Federation of Teachers, 2540 Severn Avenue, Metairie, LA 70002, spoke in support of House Bill No. 322.

Bonnetta Franklin, Jefferson Federation of Teachers, 2540 Severn Avenue, Metairie, LA 70002 spoke in support of House Bill No. 322.

Marcus Thomas, Louisiana Association of Educators, 8322 One Calais Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70809, spoke in support of House Bill No. 322.

Chad Landry, Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 322 and read a prepared statement on behalf of Dahlia El-Shafei, no witness card provided, which is labeled Exhibit A in the committee records.

Michael Faulk, Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, 2713 Indian Mound Boulevard, Monroe, LA 71201, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 322.

Hennessy Melancon, 252 Old Safari Heights, Cut Off, LA 70345, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 322.

Daryl Boyd, 404 Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 322.

Representative Melerine offered a motion to report House Bill No. 322 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 322 was reported with amendments 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: 4 in support, and 3 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 362 by Representative Kerner

Representative Kerner presented House Bill No. 362, which requires schools to provide information regarding tutorship to the parents of certain students at Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 362 that provided for terminology relative to tutorship to be consistent with the terminology used in Senate Bill No. 61. 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, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Marsha Clanton, no witness card provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 362.

Dannie Garrett, Louisiana School Boards Association, 635 Main Street, #3, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 362.

Representative Carpenter offered a motion to report House Bill No. 362 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 362 was reported with amendments 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: 3 in support, and 4 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 107 by Representative Bayham

Representative Bayham presented House Bill No. 107, which prohibits certain types of discipline of students in elementary and secondary schools.

Susan East Nelson, Louisiana Partnership for Children & Families, 7515 Jefferson Highway, #52, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 107.

Dr. Libbie Sonnier, P.O. Box 13552, New Orleans, LA 70185, spoke in support of House Bill No. 107.

Vice Chair Amedée in the chair.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 107 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 107 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support, and 3 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 107 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

Chair Schlegel in the chair.

House Bill No. 334 by Representative Amedée

Representative Amedée presented House Bill No. 334, which authorizes school boards to provide for chaplains to serve in public schools as employees or on a volunteer basis.

Ronald Hackenberg, Pacific Justice Institute, P.O. Box 2005, Ocean Springs, MS 39564, spoke in support of House Bill No. 334.

Tia LeBrun, 105 Hermitage Avenue, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 334.

Melissa Flournoy, 10,000 Women, 650 North Sixth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 334.

Representative Owen offered a motion to report House Bill No. 334 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 334 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, Young, and voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, and 1 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 334 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 583 by Representative Amedée

Representative Amedée presented House Bill No. 583, which provides for school choice with respect to foreign language immersion.

Representative Amedée offered amendments to House Bill No. 583 that:

1. Removed the name change of the International School in Lafayette to L'Académie de la Louisiane.
2. Removed the narrowing scope of school from a world language immersion school to only French language.
3. Removed the provision of governance of the school by a 16-member board of directors.
4. Removed the expansion of École Pointe-au-Chien from a school for students in grades pre-K through 4 to also include grade 5.
5. Removed the authorization for École Pointe-au-Chien campus locations outside of Terrebonne Parish.

Representative Amedée 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, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yeas.

Representative Young offered amendments to House Bill No. 583 that removed the requirement for local school boards to make available to any school or campus established pursuant to proposed law any vacant school facilities or any facilities slated to be vacant for lease or purchase up to fair market value. Representative Young offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yeas.

Matt Diez, Louisiana Parents for French Immersion, 345 West Ardenwood Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, spoke in support of House Bill No. 583.

Baley Champagne, United Houma Nation, 107 Hargrave Drive, Lafayette, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 583.

Tia LeBrun, Louisiana Parents of French Immersion, 105 Hermitage Avenue, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke in support of House Bill No. 583.

Beth Scioneaux, no witness card provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 583.

Norby Chabert, Télé Louisiane, 6513 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, spoke in support of House Bill No. 583.

Julie Silva, no witness card provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 583.

Vice Chair Amedée in the chair.

Scott Tilton, 906 Royal Street, New Orleans, LA 70116, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 583.

Representative Brass in the chair.

Jacob Newsom, 1688 Tudor Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 583.

Kristin Sanders, Office of Cultural Development, 1051 North Third Street, 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 583.

Peggy Feehan, Council for the Development of French in Louisiana, 217 West Main Street, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 583.

Lindsay Smythe, École Saint-Landry, 353 Sunset Strip, Sunset, LA 70584, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 583.

Representative Amedée offered a motion to report House Bill No. 583 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 583 was reported with amendments by a vote of 12 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Chair Schlegel in the chair.

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

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 583 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

House Bill No. 547 by Representative Amedée

Representative Amedée presented House Bill No. 547, which requires the Louisiana Educational Television Authority (LETA) to include funds for French language educational programming in its annual budget request to the division of administration.

Lindsay Smythe, École Saint-Landry, 353 Sunset Strip, Sunset, LA 70584, spoke in support of House Bill No. 547.

Philippe Billeaudeau, Télé Louisiane, 202 Pompano Street, Lafayette, LA 70508, spoke in support of House Bill No. 547.

Scott Tilton, no address provided, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 547.

Representative Owen offered a motion to report House Bill No. 547 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 547 was reported favorably by a vote of 13 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 3 in support, 1 in opposition, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 547 pursuant to House Rule 14.33.

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Carver 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, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Melerine, Owen, Tarver, Taylor, and Young voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Laurie Schlegel
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: