

ACT No. 742

HOUSE BILL NO. 1091

BY REPRESENTATIVES PETERSON, ARNOLD, AUBERT, AUSTIN BADON, BOBBY BADON, BALDONE, BARROW, BILLIOT, HENRY BURNS, BURRELL, CHAMPAGNE, DANAHAY, DIXON, EDWARDS, GALLOT, HARDY, HARRISON, HINES, HOFFMANN, HONEY, HOWARD, HUTTER, GIROD JACKSON, JOHNSON, ROSALIND JONES, KATZ, LAFONTA, LEBAS, MARCHAND, PEARSON, RICHMOND, SIMON, SMILEY, GARY SMITH, JANE SMITH, PATRICIA SMITH, TRAHAN, TUCKER, WADDELL, AND WILLIAMS AND SENATOR GRAY

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:221(E) and to enact R.S. 17:221.4, relative to withdrawal
3 from school; to authorize certain students to withdraw from school under certain
4 circumstances; to provide for guidelines and procedures with respect to withdrawal
5 from school; to create a dropout prevention and recovery program; to provide for the
6 collection and reporting of related data; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:221(E) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:221.4 is
9 hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §221. School attendance; compulsory ages; duty of parents; excessive absences;
11 consent to withdraw

12 * * *

13 E.(1) A child between the ages of seventeen and eighteen may withdraw
14 from school prior to graduation if both the following circumstances exist:

15 (a) with the written Written consent of is granted by his parent, tutor, or legal
16 guardian.

17 (b) An exit interview is conducted where the student and his parent, tutor,
18 or legal guardian provide written acknowledgment that withdrawal from school shall
19 likely reduce the student's future earning potential and increase the student's
20 likelihood of being unemployed in the future. During such exit interview, a student
21 who is withdrawing from school shall be given information that has been prepared

1 and supplied by the Louisiana Workforce Commission regarding available training
2 and employment opportunity programs, provided such information is available.

3 (2) A parent, tutor, or legal guardian who has given written consent for a
4 child under his control or charge to withdraw from school prior to graduation as
5 provided in this Subsection shall not be subject to the penalty provided for a
6 violation of the requirement of Subsection A of this Section.

7 * * *

8 §221.4. Dropout prevention and recovery program

9 A. This Section shall be known and may be cited as the "Louisiana School
10 Dropout Prevention Act of 2008".

11 B.(1) The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall work
12 with city, parish, and other local public school systems that have the lowest four-year
13 cohort graduation rates. The state board shall incorporate specific dropout
14 prevention strategies, target resources, and gather data that will improve graduation
15 rates and educational outcomes in all grades in all schools.

16 (2) The state board shall develop specific methods of targeted intervention
17 or identify appropriate existing methods for city, parish, and other local public
18 school systems that have a four-year cohort graduation rate of less than seventy
19 percent as determined by the state board. These intervention methods may include:

20 (a) Early intervention for students who are at risk of failing Algebra I or any
21 ninth grade math class.

22 (b) Alternative programs designed to reengage dropouts.

23 (c) Increased availability of advanced placement courses.

24 (d) Comprehensive coaching for middle school students who are below
25 grade level in reading and math.

26 (e) Teacher advisories such as the use of graduation coaches and other
27 supports that are designed to specifically address the needs of youth most at risk of
28 dropping out of school.

29 (f) Strategies specifically designed to improve the high school graduation
30 rate of students at highest risk for dropping out, including youth in the foster care

1 system, pregnant and parenting youth, Limited English Proficient students, and
2 students with special education needs.

3 (g) Communicating with students and their parents or legal guardians about
4 the availability of local after school programs and the academic enrichment and other
5 activities the programs offered.

6 (h) Opportunities for credit recovery.

7 (i) Opportunities to participate in the Jobs for America's Graduates program.

8 (3) The state board shall also gather the following data to ensure that all
9 programs are research-based and data-driven and use such data for continuous
10 program improvement:

11 (a) Total number of high school suspensions and expulsions.

12 (b) Total number of students enrolled in alternative schools.

13 (c) Total number of students who have failed Algebra I or English I.

14 (d) Total number of students who are repeating the ninth grade.

15 (e) Total number of students required to repeat a ninth grade course.

16 (4) City, parish, and other local public school systems that fail to show a
17 decline in their annual dropout rates shall prepare and submit to the state board each
18 year a written report that documents:

19 (a) The outcomes of the dropout prevention strategies to date at the school
20 system level.

21 (b) How the school system dropout prevention strategies and activities will
22 be modified, based on the data.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____