

2015 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 167

BY SENATOR BROOME

SCHOOLS. Directs public elementary school governing authorities to report to DOE regarding alternative discipline strategies utilized prior to suspending or expelling students in grades Pre-K through five out of school.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To direct the governing authority of each public elementary school to report to the state  
3 Department of Education regarding all alternative behavioral strategies and  
4 interventions utilized to address undesirable student behavior prior to suspending or  
5 expelling a child in prekindergarten through fifth grade out of school.

6 WHEREAS, persistent discipline problems are often the manifestation of deeper  
7 underlying issues that need to be addressed in order for a child to overcome his challenges  
8 and learn to exhibit positive behaviors conducive to his learning and that of his classmates;  
9 and

10 WHEREAS, educators, medical doctors, and mental health professionals generally  
11 agree that suspending or expelling a child out of school does not produce the desired  
12 improvement in student behavior and can actually initiate and perpetuate a cycle that  
13 ultimately results in a child withdrawing socially, dropping out of school, and entering the  
14 juvenile justice system; and

15 WHEREAS, some research indicates that eliminating the use of out-of-school  
16 suspension and expulsions for children in younger grades and instituting positive and  
17 proactive alternative discipline practices can redirect a child's undesirable behavior and  
18 foster a more conducive learning environment for all students; and

1           WHEREAS, during the 2013-2014 school year, approximately thirty-one thousand  
2 Louisiana students in grades Pre-K through five were suspended or expelled, and it is an  
3 inescapable fact that a child cannot learn if he is not in the classroom; and

4           WHEREAS, the large number of young students suspended or expelled raises the  
5 question as to whether schools place a high priority on keeping a child in the classroom  
6 where learning takes place, reserving out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for the most  
7 severe disciplinary infractions; and

8           WHEREAS, a report prepared by the state Department of Education in response to  
9 Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 134 of the 2014 Regular Session notes that although  
10 suspension and expulsion rates in Louisiana have remained relatively stable, there are large  
11 differences in these rates across school systems, indicating a lack of knowledge or resources  
12 regarding best practices to address student discipline that needs to be identified and  
13 redressed.

14           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana  
15 does hereby direct the governing authority of each public elementary school to report to the  
16 state Department of Education regarding all alternative behavioral strategies and  
17 interventions utilized to address undesirable student behavior prior to suspending or  
18 expelling a child in prekindergarten through fifth grade out of school.

19           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state Department of Education shall compile  
20 the information provided in these reports and submit a summary report to the Senate  
21 Committee on Education and the House Committee on Education not later than sixty days  
22 prior to the beginning of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

23           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
24 state superintendent of education for dissemination to the governing authority of each public  
25 elementary school, along with instructions and guidelines for submission of the required  
26 reports.

