AN ACT

To enact Chapter 45 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 17:4071 through 4073, and R.S. 36:651(T)(6), relative to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education; to create the Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Advisory Council and provide for its membership, powers, duties, and functions; to create and provide with respect to the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education Fund; to provide for a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics high school diploma endorsement; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Chapter 45 of Title 17 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 17:4071 through 4073, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

CHAPTER 45. LOUISIANA SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS EDUCATION (LaSTEM)

§4071. Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Advisory Council; creation; membership; powers, duties, and functions

A. The Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Advisory Council (LaSTEM) is hereby created under the auspices of the Board of Regents to coordinate and oversee the creation, delivery, and promotion of...
STEM education programs, to increase student interest and achievement in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, to ensure the alignment of education, economic development, industry, and workforce needs, and to increase the number of women who graduate from a postsecondary institution with a STEM degree or credential.

B. The council shall consist of twenty-nine members as follows:

(1) The commissioner of higher education, or his designee.

(2) The secretary of the Department of Economic Development, or his designee.

(3) The executive director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, or his designee.

(4) The state superintendent of education, or his designee.

(5) The president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, or his designee.

(6) The president of the Louisiana State University System, or his designee.

(7) The president of the Southern University System, or his designee.

(8) The president of the University of Louisiana System, or his designee.

(9) The president of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, or his designee.

(10) The executive director of the Louisiana School Boards Association, or his designee.

(11) The executive director of the Louisiana Association of Principals, or his designee.

(12) The executive director of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, or his designee.

(13) The president of the Louisiana Science Teachers Association, or his designee.

(14) The president of the Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics, or his designee.
(15) Two members who are on the faculty of a Louisiana postsecondary education institution and who teach in a STEM discipline, appointed by the commissioner of higher education.

(16) The president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, or his designee.

(17) Three members with demonstrated interest, experience, and expertise in STEM education, appointed by the governor.

(18) Three members representing key industries in the state, appointed by the secretary of the Department of Economic Development.

(19) A member of the Louisiana Senate, appointed by the president of the Senate.

(20) A member of the Louisiana House of Representatives, appointed by the speaker of the House.

(21) The chairman of the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council, or his designee.

(22) The president of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, or his designee.

(23) The president of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, or his designee.

(24) The president of the Louisiana Association of Educators, or his designee.

C. Vacancies shall be filled in the manner of appointment.

D. Members shall serve without compensation or reimbursement of expenses, other than what may be afforded by their appointing authority. Legislative members of the council shall receive the same per diem and reimbursement of travel expenses as is provided for legislative committee meetings under the rules of the respective house in which they serve.

E. The council shall be chaired by the commissioner of higher education or his designee. The secretary of the Department of Economic Development, or his designee, shall serve as the initial vice chairman of the council. Thereafter,
the vice chairmanship shall alternate on a triennial basis between the state superintendent of education, or his designee, the secretary of the Department of Economic Development, or his designee, and the executive director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission, or his designee. The council may elect such other officers as it deems necessary.

F. The council shall meet monthly and at such other times as called by the chairman. Beginning August 31, 2018, the council shall be required to meet only quarterly. The commissioner of higher education shall convene the first meeting of the council not later than September 15, 2017.

G. A majority of the total membership shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business and all actions taken by the council shall require the affirmative vote of the majority of the members present and voting.

H. As funding allows, the council shall:

(1) Create a comprehensive, statewide STEM plan that contains clear objectives to guide the development of STEM education and STEM career opportunities and aligns elementary, secondary, and postsecondary STEM curricula, programs, initiatives, and activities.

(2) Coordinate all state STEM education-related programs and activities.

(3) Create a new STEM culture and promote activities that raise awareness of STEM education and STEM career opportunities.

(4) Integrate employers and educators by engaging business and industry, employers, professional and community-based organizations, and other stakeholders in STEM education and career and talent programs and activities.

(5) Encourage industry and business entities to provide funding, resources, and technical assistance to elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools to promote interest in STEM discipline courses and career opportunities.

(6) Connect STEM education resources, initiatives, and programs
regionally and throughout the state.

(7) Establish an information clearinghouse, to be housed at the Board of Regents, to identify and provide best practice resources for both the secondary and postsecondary educational systems and to review and acquire STEM education-related instructional materials.

(8) Empower STEM teachers and provide support for high quality professional development for teachers of STEM subjects.

(9) As appropriate, join and participate in a national STEM network and collaborate with other states in STEM education program development.

(10) Establish a competitive grants program to fund robotics competitions to provide students at all appropriate grade levels opportunities to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics skills by participating in events sponsored by a science and technology development program known as FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics. The program may be funded through the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education Fund and any other available public or private funds.

I. The council may:

(1) Establish such subcommittees and workgroups as the council deems necessary and appropriate to carry out its duties and responsibilities.

(2) Solicit funds, contributions, and grants from any allowable source to implement the provisions of this Section and to further STEM education in the state.

(3) Seek the expertise and services of individuals and entities outside its membership for research, advice, and other needs as required to carry out the council's mission.

J. The council, through the Board of Regents, shall submit a status report regarding all actions taken to implement the provisions of this Section, including metrics that measure the success of implementing council activities and initiatives and any recommendations for legislation or policy changes, to the
Senate Committee on Education and the House Committee on Education by
January thirtieth of each year.

§4072. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education Fund

A. The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Fund is hereby created in the state treasury for the purpose of conducting student-focused, project-based, programs and competitions in STEM subjects, including robotics, coding, and design-build test projects, in grades prekindergarten through college level.

B.(1) The source of monies deposited into the fund shall be legislative appropriations. Monies in the fund shall be subject to appropriation by the legislature and shall be available exclusively for programs and initiatives prescribed by the Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Advisory Council.

(2) The treasurer is hereby authorized to establish a separate account within the fund for the deposit of grants and donations received by the Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Advisory Council. If the terms and conditions of the grant or donation or the agreements pertaining thereto require that the monies not be deposited into the treasury, the grant or donation may nevertheless be deposited into the fund. Monies in this separate account shall not be subject to legislative appropriation but shall be used by the council only to further their mission.

C. All unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund. Such monies shall be invested by the state treasurer in the same manner as monies in the state general fund, and interest earned on the investment of these monies shall be credited to the fund, after compliance with the requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana, relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund.

D. The council shall adopt a resolution stating which members or officers are authorized to withdraw money from the fund and the separate account in the fund, which resolution shall be submitted to the state treasury.
Monies in the fund and the separate account shall only be used by the council
to further their mission.

§4073. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; diploma
endorsement program

A. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in
consultation with the Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and
Mathematics Advisory Council, shall establish a Science, Technology,
Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) diploma endorsement to recognize a
high school student who exhibits superior academic achievement in STEM
discipline subjects.

B. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
establish the minimum course, proficiency, and other requirements the board
deems necessary and appropriate for a student to earn the STEM diploma
endorsement.

C. The state Department of Education and each public school governing
authority shall provide information regarding the requirements for STEM
diploma endorsement to all students enrolled in grades six through twelve and
their parents.

D. The governing authority of each public high school shall maintain the
records needed to identify students who have earned the STEM diploma
endorsement and shall note such on the transcript of each student who earns the
endorsement.

E. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall adopt
rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to implement the
provisions of this Section.

Section 2. R.S. 36:651(T)(6) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§651. Transfer of boards, commissions, departments, and agencies to Department of
Education; boards, commissions, and agencies within Department of
Education

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Coding: Words which are struck through are deletions from existing law; words in **boldface type and underscored** are additions.
T. The following agencies are placed within the Department of Education and shall perform and exercise their powers, duties, functions, and responsibilities as provided by law:

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Section 3. Nothing in this Act shall be construed in a manner as to supersede the constitutionally and statutorily prescribed powers, duties, and responsibilities of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Board of Regents, or a postsecondary education management board.

Section 4. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on the day following such approval.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: ____________