
The original instrument was prepared by Sherri H. Breaux. The following digest, which does not constitute a part of the legislative instrument, was prepared by Martha Hess.

DIGEST

Shaw (SB 46)

Proposed law creates the La. Virtual School in the Dept. of Education as a technology-based program to expand learning opportunities for high school students through courses of study that may not otherwise be available to students and offer access to a full menu of standards-based, online courses of study in subjects which are delivered by certified teachers using the Internet, electronic mail, and other online resources.

Provides for the enrollment of high school students in virtual school courses through their high schools. Authorizes the governing authority of each public secondary school to do the following:

- (1) Enter into a La. Virtual School Agreement with the department. Provides that such agreement shall not prohibit a school's governing authority from contracting with a private provider of virtual education courses, instruction, or content.
- (2) Identify a school site facilitator to oversee the registration process for students and assist with other related administrative matters.
- (3) Develop and adopt policies that provide students with educational opportunities through the virtual school, including a process for access to and enrollment in a virtual school course of study and a procedure for awarding credit to a student who successfully completes a virtual school course of study.

Provides the governing authority of a public secondary school shall make every effort to provide student access to any course offered by the virtual school that is not offered by the student's high school at the time the student wishes to enroll in the course.

Provides that credit for all courses of study completed through the virtual school be granted through the high school. Requires a mid-term progress report and final letter grade to be issued by the instructor and forwarded to the high school through the department.

Requires, beginning on January 1, 2012, the governing authority of each public secondary school to provide written notification of the virtual school option and available virtual school courses to each student, and the student's parent/legal guardian, at the time the student enrolls in high school.

Requires BESE to adopt rules in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act to adopt rules, including the imposition of any fees to be charged to participating students and schools, to implement proposed law.

Provides that implementation of proposed law is subject to the appropriation of funds by the legislature.

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:236.4)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Education to the original bill.

1. Makes technical changes.
2. Specifies that the virtual school agreement shall not prohibit contracts with private providers.
3. Prohibits limiting student access to courses not offered by the high school.
4. Requires BESE to adopt rules in accordance with APA, including the imposition of any fees.
5. Makes implementation contingent upon legislative appropriation.

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Finance to the engrossed bill.

1. Removes the date certain by which the governing authority of each public secondary school was to enter into a Louisiana Virtual School Agreement and take other actions.
2. Changes from mandatory to discretionary, requirement that the governing authority of a public secondary school enter a Louisiana Virtual School Agreement and to take certain other actions.
3. Changes from mandatory requirement to use best efforts, by the governing authority of a public secondary school to provide student access to any course of study offered by a virtual school that is not offered by the high school in which a student is enrolled.