

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 763

BY REPRESENTATIVES ORTEGO AND GISCLAIR

SCHOOLS: Provides relative to foreign language immersion programs in public schools

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a) and to enact R.S. 17:273.3(E), (F), and (G),
3 relative to foreign language immersion programs in public schools; to prohibit local
4 school boards from denying enrollment in a foreign language immersion program to
5 certain students; to provide with respect to requirements for the establishment,
6 continuation, and certification of such programs; to provide restrictions; to provide
7 for an effective date; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S.
10 17:273.3(E), (F), and (G) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

11 §273.3. Foreign language immersion programs; creation by local school boards;
12 parent petition

13 * * *

14 C.

15 * * *

16 (2)(a) Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a local school board, if
17 requested in writing by the ~~parent or legal guardian~~ parents or legal guardians of at
18 least twenty-five students seeking to be enrolled in kindergarten or of at least twenty-
19 five students seeking to be enrolled in first grade who reside within the jurisdictional

1 boundaries of the school district, shall establish a foreign language immersion
2 program for such students, provided that all of the following apply:

3 * * *

4 E. A local public school board shall not deny enrollment in a foreign
5 language immersion program to any student who resides within the jurisdictional
6 boundaries of the school district and who applies for enrollment in such a program
7 by no later than March first of the school year prior to such enrollment.

8 F. The requirements of Subparagraph (C)(2)(b) and Subsection E of this
9 Section shall apply to a foreign language immersion program established prior to the
10 2012-2013 school year. The local school board shall ensure that such program is
11 designated as a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program by the State Board
12 of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with R.S. 17:273.2 by not
13 later than July 1, 2017.

14 G. Nothing in this Section shall contravene any order of a court of competent
15 jurisdiction providing for the assignment of pupils within the school system.

16 Section 2. This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2014; if vetoed by the governor
17 and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on July 1,
18 2014, or on the day following such approval by the legislature, whichever is later.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

Ortego HB No. 763

Abstract: Provides relative to the enrollment of students in foreign language immersion programs in public schools.

Present law provides for the "Immersion School Choice Law" as follows:

- (1) Authorizes a local public school board to establish a foreign language immersion program in any school under its jurisdiction. The program shall be open to the enrollment of any student who resides within the jurisdictional boundaries of the school district.
- (2) Provides that, beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a local public school board, if requested in writing signed by the parent or legal guardian of at least 25 students enrolled in kindergarten who reside within the jurisdictional boundaries of the school

district, shall establish a foreign language immersion program for such students if specified other criteria are met.

- (3) Provides that such program shall be continued as long as at least 20 students remain enrolled in the program.
- (4) Requires the local school board to ensure that any foreign language immersion program created pursuant to proposed law is designated as a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program in accordance with present law.
- (5) Provides that a local school board shall not be required to provide transportation to any student enrolled in a foreign language immersion program established that is located outside the attendance zone of the school the student would otherwise attend if providing such transportation would result in additional transportation costs to the school system.

Proposed law adds provisions that require, beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a local public school board, board, if requested in writing signed by the parents or legal guardians of at least 25 students to be enrolled in kindergarten or first grade, to establish a foreign language immersion program for such students if specified other criteria are met. Otherwise retains present law.

Proposed law prohibits local school boards from denying enrollment in a foreign language immersion program to any student who resides within the jurisdictional boundaries of the school district and who applies to enroll in such a program by no later than March 1 of the school year prior to such enrollment.

Proposed law provides that, for a foreign language immersion program established prior to the 2012-2013 school year, the requirements of present law that require enrollment of 20 students for continuation of the program and that require enrollment of timely applicants shall apply. Further provides that the local school board shall ensure that such program is designated as a Certified Foreign Language Immersion Program by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with present law (R.S. 17:273.2) by not later than July 1, 2017.

Proposed law provides that nothing in present law and proposed law shall contravene any order of a court of competent jurisdiction providing for the assignment of pupils within the school system.

Effective July 1, 2014.

(Amends R.S. 17:273.3(C)(2)(a); Adds R.S. 17:273.3(E), (F), and (G))