

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 243

BY REPRESENTATIVE MANDIE LANDRY

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

STUDENT/ASSESSMENT: Provides relative to student assessment and school accountability with respect to the Louisiana Giving All True Opportunity to Rise (LA GATOR) Scholarship Program

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact 17:4037.10, relative to the Louisiana Giving All True Opportunity to
3 Rise (LA GATOR) Scholarship Program; to provide for the assessments
4 administered to students participating in the program; to provide for the
5 accountability of participating nonpublic schools; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:4037.10 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

8 §4037.10. Testing; accountability

9 A. The department shall develop a process for the annual administration of
10 ~~either of the following~~ all examinations required pursuant to the school and district
11 accountability system at the prescribed grade levels to participating ~~students~~.
12 students.

13 ~~(1) Any examination in English language arts and mathematics required~~
14 ~~pursuant to the school and district accountability system at the prescribed grade~~
15 ~~level.~~

16 ~~(2) A nationally norm-referenced test or assessment approved by the state~~
17 ~~board.~~

18 B. ~~Notwithstanding Subsection A of this Section:~~

1 ~~(1) Upon approval by the state board, a participating nonpublic school may~~
2 ~~select an assessment that is substantially aligned with its program of study and that~~
3 ~~is to be administered to participating students.~~

4 (2) A student with an exceptionality shall not be required to take any
5 assessment from which the student would have been exempt if enrolled in a public
6 school.

7 C. (1) The department shall develop a scholarship cohort index using
8 substantially the same criteria used to develop school performance scores pursuant
9 to the school and district accountability system as provided in R.S. 17:10.1. Using
10 the assessment scores for all participating students and the scale applicable to public
11 schools, the department shall assign a corresponding letter grade for the cohort of
12 participating students at each nonpublic participating school. The department shall
13 publish the letter grade in the same manner and at the same time as those assigned
14 to public schools.

15 (2) Accountability criteria shall vary depending on the number of
16 participating students enrolled in the school as of October first annually as follows:

17 (a) If there is an average of zero to nine-point-nine participating students per
18 grade in kindergarten through twelve at the school and fewer than forty students
19 enrolled in tested grades, test scores shall be reported publicly for the entirety of the
20 participating student cohort if the school has ten or more participating students
21 taking tests, as well as for any grade level with ten or more participating students
22 taking tests.

23 (b) If there is an average of ten or more participating students per grade in
24 kindergarten through twelve at the school or forty or more students enrolled in tested
25 grades, test scores shall be reported publicly for the entirety of the participating
26 student cohort if the school has ten or more participating students taking tests as well
27 as for any grade level with ten or more participating students taking tests.

28 (3)(a) If the school receives a scholarship cohort index below fifty in the
29 second year of participation or in any year thereafter on a scale of one hundred fifty,

1 the school shall not enroll additional scholarship recipients for the next school year.

2 Students attending a participating school that receives a score below fifty in any year

3 shall have priority admission to attend another participating school the following

4 year.

5 (b) Following four school years of program participation, and in any period

6 of four school years thereafter, if the participating school has scored below fifty for

7 the majority of years in which it received a scholarship cohort index, the school may

8 enroll new scholarship recipients only after achieving a score greater than fifty and

9 a satisfactory quality review by the department.

10 (c) A participating school that for three consecutive years receives a

11 scholarship cohort index below fifty shall be ineligible to participate in the program.

12 D. The department shall develop a process for the collection and aggregate

13 reporting of assessment results and shall ensure that the results of such assessments

14 are provided to parents of participating students and the public.

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)]

HB 243 Original

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Mandie Landry

Abstract: Provides for the assessment of students and school accountability with respect to the LA GATOR program.

Present law provides for the La. Giving All True Opportunity to Rise (LA GATOR) Scholarship Program, which is administered by the state Dept. of Education (DOE) and provides state funding for qualified education expenses for students in grades kindergarten through 12. Proposed law retains present law.

Present law requires DOE to develop a process for the annual administration of either of the following to participating students:

- (1) Any examination in English language arts and mathematics required pursuant to the present law school and district accountability system at the prescribed grade level.
- (2) A nationally norm-referenced test or assessment approved by the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

Present law also allows, subject to BESE approval, a participating nonpublic school to select an assessment that is substantially aligned with its program of study and that is to be administered to participating students. Proposed law instead requires DOE to develop a process for annual administration of all examinations required pursuant to such

accountability system at the prescribed grade levels. Further requires DOE to do the following:

- (1) Develop a scholarship cohort index using substantially the same criteria used to develop school performance scores pursuant to such accountability system.
- (2) Using the scores for all participating students and the scale applicable to public schools, assign a corresponding letter grade to each nonpublic participating school.
- (3) Publish each letter grade in the same manner and at the same time as those assigned to public schools.

Proposed law further provides for specific accountability measures for the LA GATOR program as provided in present administrative rule for the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program, including sanctions relative to certain results.

Present law exempts participating students who would be exempt from assessment if attending public school and requires DOE to develop a process for the collection and aggregate reporting of assessment results and to ensure that results are provided to parents of participating students and the public. Proposed law retains present law.

(Amends R.S. 17:4037.10)