

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 346

BY REPRESENTATIVE PHELPS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request each city, parish, and other local public school board and the governing authority of each charter school to develop and implement strategic plans for the disposition and security of school buildings and property in the event of school closures and to report to the state Department of Education relative to such closures and plans and to urge and request the department to submit a report to the House Committee on Education compiling the information provided by the school boards and charter school governing authorities.

WHEREAS, there have been reports of declining enrollment in Louisiana's public schools; and

WHEREAS, it is important to consider the best use of school buildings and property in the event that declining enrollment leads to school closures around the state; and

WHEREAS, community members have expressed concern about safety and security needs with respect to the impact on surrounding neighborhoods of vacant school campuses and potentially blighted school property; and

WHEREAS, strategies should be developed for reusing or redeveloping vacant campuses in ways that address the needs of each community; and

WHEREAS, options that have been discussed for some vacant campuses include converting school buildings into alumni centers or housing for teachers or slating the properties for demolition if that option is deemed the safest and most cost-effective option due to age or disrepair; and

WHEREAS, school officials should be proactive in planning ahead for potential school closures due to declining enrollment in order to serve the best interests of their respective communities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request each city, parish, and other local public school board and the governing authority of each charter school to develop and implement strategic plans for the disposition and security of school buildings and property in the event of school closures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in developing such plans, school boards and charter school governing authorities should hold hearings for the purposes of discussing the plans and receiving input from local stakeholders, including but not limited to students and parents; teachers, administrators, and other school employees; chambers of commerce; law enforcement officials; and community leaders.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives urges and requests school boards and charter school governing authorities to submit a written report to the state Department of Education that includes, at a minimum, currently vacant campuses and those anticipated to become vacant over the course of the 2025-2026 school year not later than September 30, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives urges and requests school boards and charter school governing authorities to submit a written update to the department on strategic plans regarding such vacancies, including but not limited to specific timelines relative to securing campuses and disposing of property, not later than December 31, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives urges and requests the state Department of Education to submit a written report compiling the information provided in such reports, disaggregated by school board and charter school governing authority, to the House Committee on Education not later than March 1, 2026.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the state superintendent of education for dissemination to each city, parish, and other local public school board and the governing authority of each charter school.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES