

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 558

BY REPRESENTATIVE ECHOLS

TEACHERS/SALARY: Provides relative to public school teacher compensation

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:418.2, 418.3, and 3996(B)(24), relative to teacher salaries; to provide for
3 the adjustment of teacher salary schedules to reach certain levels with respect to a
4 certain regional average; to provide for definitions; to provide for rules; to provide
5 for applicability; to provide for reporting; to provide for funding; to provide for
6 effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1.(A) This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Teacher Pay
9 Modernization Act".

10 (B) The legislature recognizes, as provided in the Preamble of Article VIII of the
11 Constitution of Louisiana, that the goal of the public educational system is to provide
12 learning environments and experiences, at all stages of human development, that are
13 humane, just, and designed to promote excellence in order that every individual may be
14 afforded an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential. The legislature finds that
15 classroom teachers play a significant role in helping each student develop to his full
16 potential. It is the intent of the legislature that governmental efficiency efforts are
17 maximized at all levels of state government to realize savings that can be appropriated by
18 the legislature for the purposes of adjusting teacher salaries.

19 Section 2. R.S. 17:418.2 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

1 §418.2. Teacher salaries; reporting

2 A. The state Department of Education shall submit a written report not later
3 than October 1, 2026, to the House Committee on Education, the Senate Committee
4 on Education, the House Committee on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on
5 Finance, and each school governing authority that includes the following relative to
6 teacher salaries:

7 (1) Each district's most recent average annual teacher salary as determined
8 by the state Department of Education.

9 (2) Louisiana's most recent average teacher salary as determined by the state
10 Department of Education.

11 (3) The most recent average annual teacher salary reported by the Southern
12 Regional Education Board.

13 (4) An analysis of the funding of teacher salary schedules and
14 recommendations for how to maximize competitiveness and efficiency by
15 modernizing employee and retirement benefits in order that both the state and school
16 governing authorities may realize savings that could be invested in teacher salary
17 increases.

18 B. For purposes of this Section:

19 (1) "District" means the school or group of schools under the jurisdiction of
20 a school governing authority.

21 (2) "School governing authority" means each city, parish, and other local
22 public school board, the governing authority of each state special school, and the
23 governing authority of each charter school.

24 C. Each department as defined in R.S. 36:3(3) shall submit a written report
25 by November fifteenth annually to the House Committee on Appropriations and the
26 Senate Committee on Finance that identifies the potential consolidation of functions,
27 offices, and divisions, elimination of job positions, and other efforts toward
28 efficiency and economy of services that could generate savings to be appropriated
29 by the legislature for the purposes of adjusting teacher salaries as provided in R.S.
30 17:418.3.

1 Section 3. R.S. 17:418.3 and 3996(B)(24) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

2 §418.3. Teacher salaries; salary schedule adjustments; reporting; rules

3 A. For purposes of this Section:

4 (1) "District" means the school or group of schools under the jurisdiction of
5 a school governing authority.

6 (2) "District average" means a district's most recent average annual teacher
7 salary as determined by the state Department of Education.

8 (3) "School governing authority" means each city, parish, and other local
9 public school board, the governing authority of each state special school, and the
10 governing authority of each charter school.

11 (4) "Southern regional average" means the most recent average annual
12 teacher salary reported by the Southern Regional Education Board or its successor
13 organization.

14 (5) "Statewide average" means Louisiana's most recent average teacher
15 salary as determined by the state Department of Education.

16 (6) "Teacher" means a certificated classroom teacher.

17 B.(1) For Fiscal Year 2027-2028, each school governing authority shall
18 adjust its salary schedule as necessary to reduce by at least twenty-five percent the
19 difference between its district average and the Southern regional average.

20 (2) For Fiscal Year 2028-2029, each school governing authority shall adjust
21 its salary schedule as necessary to reduce by at least fifty percent the remaining
22 difference between its district average and the Southern regional average.

23 (3) For Fiscal Year 2029-2030, each school governing authority shall adjust
24 its salary schedule as necessary to reduce by at least seventy-five percent the
25 remaining difference between its district average and the Southern regional average.

26 (4) For Fiscal Year 2030-2031 and each fiscal year thereafter, each school
27 governing authority shall adjust its salary schedule as necessary for the district's
28 average annual teacher salary for the applicable year to equal or exceed the Southern
29 regional average.

1 C. The state Department of Education shall submit a written report not later
2 than October first annually to the House Committee on Education, the Senate
3 Committee on Education, the House Committee on Appropriations, the Senate
4 Committee on Finance, and each school governing authority that includes the
5 following relative to teacher salaries:

- 6 (1) Each district average.
- 7 (2) The statewide average.
- 8 (3) The Southern regional average.
- 9 (4) The amount of any state funding appropriated and distributed to school
10 governing authorities for the purposes of this Section.
- 11 (5) School governing authority compliance with the provisions of this
12 Section.
- 13 (6) The remaining difference between the statewide average and the
14 Southern regional average, if any.

15 D. No school governing authority shall use funds appropriated by the
16 legislature for the purposes of this Section for any purposes other than permanent,
17 direct increases to base teacher salary schedules. Funds shall not be used for benefits
18 or retirement costs, bonuses or one-time stipends, administrative salaries,
19 professional services, or operating expenses. The use of funds as provided in this
20 Subsection shall be subject to compliance audits.

21 E. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education shall adopt rules
22 for the implementation of the provisions of this Section and R.S. 17:3996(B)(24)
23 relative to the application of these provisions to charter schools.

24 * * *

25 §3996. Charter schools; exemptions; requirements

26 * * *

27 B. Notwithstanding any state law, rule, or regulation to the contrary and
28 except as may be otherwise specifically provided for in an approved charter, a
29 charter school established and operated in accordance with the provisions of this

includes the following relative to teacher salaries: each district average, the statewide average, and the Southern regional average.

- (2) Requires the 20 executive branch departments to submit a written report by Nov. 15th annually to the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance that identifies the potential consolidation of functions, offices, and divisions, elimination of job positions, and other efforts toward efficiency and economy of services that could generate savings to be appropriated by the legislature for the purposes of adjusting teacher salaries as provided in proposed law.

Proposed law, effective on July 1, 2027, if the legislature enacts a specific appropriation of monies for such proposed law implementation during the 2027 R.S. and the appropriation becomes effective:

- (1) Requires each public school governing authority to adjust its salary schedule for classroom teachers as follows:
 - (a) For FY 2027-2028, adjust it as necessary to reduce by at least 25% percent the difference between its district average and the Southern regional average.
 - (b) For FY 2028-2029, adjust it as necessary to reduce by at least 50% percent the remaining difference between its district average and the Southern regional average.
 - (c) For FY 2029-2030, adjust it as necessary to reduce by at least 75% percent the remaining difference between its district average and the Southern regional average.
 - (d) For FY 2030-2031 and each fiscal year thereafter, adjust it as necessary for the district's average annual teacher salary for the applicable year to equal or exceed the Southern regional average.
- (2) Requires the department to submit a report to the House and Senate education committees, the House Committee on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Finance, and each public school governing authority by Oct. first annually that includes all of the following:
 - (a) Each district average.
 - (b) The statewide average.
 - (c) The Southern regional average.
 - (d) The amount of any state funding appropriated and distributed to school governing authorities for proposed law purposes.
 - (e) School governing authority compliance with proposed law.
 - (f) The remaining difference between the statewide average and the Southern regional average, if any.
- (3) Prohibits a school governing authority from using funds appropriated by the legislature for proposed law purposes for any purposes other than permanent, direct increases to base teacher salary schedules. Prohibits funds from being used for benefits or retirement costs, bonuses or one-time stipends, administrative salaries, professional services, or operating expenses.

Proposed law requires the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education to adopt rules for the implementation of the above proposed law.

(Adds R.S. 17:418.2, 418.3, and 3996(B)(24))