
The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, 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)]

SB 524 Engrossed

DIGEST
2026 Regular Session

Reese

Proposed law provides for the creation of the Louisiana Jump Start Modernization Act, which may be cited as the Louisiana Jump Start Career Diploma Program.

Proposed law provides for legislative findings and purposes.

Proposed law provides for definitions.

Proposed law provides for the creation of a membership collaborative to include: The secretary of Louisiana Works, or his designee; the state Superintendent of Education, or his designee; the commissioner of Higher Education, or his designee; the president of the Louisiana Community and Technical Colleges, or his designee; the chairman of the Workforce Investment Council, or his designee; and representatives of industry sectors designated as priority industries by the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council and presidents or senior staff representing statewide business or industry associations headquartered in Louisiana.

Proposed law provides for the collaborative to review proposed decisions and to issue written recommendations to the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education prior to and as a condition of BESE's action.

Proposed law provides for the collaborative to establish, maintain, and update a statewide priority industry list identifying industry sectors in the state designated as priority industries for purposes of K-12 Jump Start pathway development and credential tier classification.

Proposed law establishes the Louisiana Jump Start Career Diploma Program which is to be known as the "Louisiana Career Diploma" which will be issued by BESE to any student who successfully completes all requirements of an approved Louisiana Jump Start pathway.

Proposed law provides for a four-stage developmental framework for K-12 career and technical education. The four stages are Stage I: Career Awareness (grades K-Six); Stage II: Career Exploration (grades Seven-Eight); Stage III: Career Concentration (grades Nine-10); and Stage IV: Career Completion (grades 11-12).

Proposed law requires each student to have an individual career and academic plan beginning in the seventh grade. This will serve as the primary longitudinal career planning instrument connecting a student's activities to the student's selection of an approved K-12 Jump Start pathway.

Proposed law provides for career counseling and career coaching standards.

Proposed law establishes pathway frameworks that must be maintained by the state Department of Education who must also publish a current list of all authorized Jump Start pathways.

Proposed law provides for pathway tiers the collaborative must establish and maintain for authorized Jump Start pathways, assigning each pathway to tiers based on industry alignment, credential value, and postsecondary and occupational outcomes.

Proposed law provides for a career major program in each authorized K-12 Jump Start pathway that constitutes the core academic and technical coursework sequence through which a student pursues a Career Diploma and the nine-credit Jump Start career and technical education course sequence.

Proposed law provides for a work-based learning quality continuum, consisting of four levels organized from least to most intensive.

Proposed law provides for the Jump Start pathway authorization application process which requires the LEA or regional team to submit a proposal to the collaborative seeking to establish an authorized Jump Start pathway. The authorization proposal mandates minimum requirements.

Proposed law provides that rural local education agencies access when they are officially classified as a rural education agency by meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) The local education agency is located in a parish where the population density, as determined from the most recently published federal decennial census data, is fewer than 100 persons per square mile.
- (2) The local education agency's total public K-12 student enrollment, as reported in the most recently published annual enrollment data of the state Department of Education, is fewer than 4,000 students.
- (3) The local education agency's primary service area has been classified as a rural locale under the National Center for Education Statistics, NCES, locale classification framework maintained by the United States Department of Education, specifically as Locale Code 41 Rural Fringe, 42 Rural Distant, or 43 Rural Remote, under the most recently published NCES locale classification data.

Proposed law provides as a condition of Jump Start pathway authorization each local education agency shall maintain at least one postsecondary articulation agreement with at least one Louisiana public postsecondary institution, with priority given to community and technical colleges. The agreement shall be submitted as evidence of compliance in the Jump Start pathway authorization proposal. If an executed agreement is not in place at time of proposal submission, the local education agency shall submit a compliance timeline under proposed law.

Proposed law requires each local education agency operating a public high school to provide each

enrolled student access to career and technical education courses, including authorized Jump Start pathways offered pursuant to proposed law.

Proposed law provides to develop and implement a Career Major Program, a local education agency can use the following program development methods:

- (1) System-wide development, in which the local education agency develops a uniform career major program across all schools under the agency's jurisdiction.
- (2) Consortium development, in which the local education agency collaborates with one or more other local education agencies or a regional team formed to jointly develop and deliver a Career Major Program.

Proposed law requires the Jump Start Annual Data Report to be publicly available by March first of each year covering data from the prior academic year.

Proposed law does not apply to the following:

- (1) Any student who, as of the effective date of this Subpart, is enrolled in a Career Major Program under the provisions of present law (R.S. 17:183.1-R.S. 17:183.5) shall be entitled to complete that program and earn a Career Diploma under the requirements applicable at the time of the student's initial enrollment in the career major program.
- (2) Each Jump Start pathway, Career Major Program, or credential-bearing program that was authorized by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education under present law (R.S. 17:183.1-R.S. 17:183.5) shall continue in effect for a transitional period of not less than 18 months following the effective date of proposed law.
- (3) An Individual Graduation Plan established for a student under present law (R.S. 17:2925) shall remain in effect and shall be honored for purposes of that student's graduation requirements, subject to the student's rights under proposed law. Nothing in proposed law must require a student to revise a prior Individual Graduation Plan solely as a result of the enactment of proposed law.
- (4) No credential earned by a student under present law (R.S. 17:183.1-R.S. 17:183.5) shall be invalidated, reclassified downward, or reduced in value for purposes of that student's diploma requirements solely by reason of the enactment of proposed law or the credential tier framework established in proposed law.

Effective August 1, 2026.

(Adds R.S. 17:189.1-189.20; repeals R.S. 17:183.1-183.5)