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DIGEST

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SB 112 Reengrossed

2026 Regular Session

Hodges

Proposed law authorizes each school board to adopt a policy that allows students, subject to parental approval, to attend a released time course. Proposed law defines such course as a course in religious instruction taught by a sponsoring entity in which a student is allowed to attend with parental approval.

Proposed law defines a "sponsoring entity" as a church or other religious organization that is tax-exempt and that receives authorization from parents and a school board to operate a released time course program.

Proposed law provides that the school is free from liability for any injury that occurs while the student is off-campus at a released time course or being transported to or from the course.

Proposed law requires that any sponsoring entity of a released time course that provides transportation of students to or from such course maintain certain automobile liability insurance. Further requires that proof of such insurance be provided to the school board as a condition of providing transportation.

Proposed law requires a criminal background check to be conducted for each instructor and any other person who may have direct contact with or may have supervisory responsibility over a student participating in a released time course. Provides an exception for other students in the course.

Proposed law requires written consent of a parent to attend the released time course to be on a form that includes a notice that contains the following:

- (1) That the school and school board has no liability for any injury that occurs while the student is at an off-campus released time course.
- (2) That the school and school board have no liability for the transportation to or from the released time course.
- (3) That the sponsoring entity is responsible for any liability associated with the released time course.
- (4) That any liability for injuries that occur during the transportation to or from the released time course shall be solely the responsibility of the sponsoring entity or the person the parent authorized to transport the student.

Proposed law requires the sponsoring entity to maintain attendance records and make them available to the school that a student attends.

Proposed law requires a released time course to be between one and five hours per school week, and if a student is absent from the course or not at school, then the student is counted as absent for truancy purposes.

Proposed law requires the state Dept. of Education to provide a course credit code that participating schools may use to award academic credit for the completion of a released time course.

Proposed law prohibits a released time course from being held on school property unless permitted under a neutral policy of equal access that opens school property for use by community groups.

Proposed law requires a school board that awards academic credit for a released time course to require the following of each instructor:

- (1) He satisfies the same qualification standards established by the school board for substitute teachers employed within the school system.
- (2) He agrees to report student grades, attendance, and any other information required by the school board to the school.

Proposed law shall be known and may be cited as the "School Released Time Education Act".

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:288.1-288.5 and 3996(B)(92))

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Education to the original bill

1. Adds the requirement that a sponsoring entity that transports students must have auto liability insurance in the amount required by school bus drivers.
2. Makes technical changes.

Senate Floor Amendments to engrossed bill

1. Adds requirement that all persons who have direct or supervisory contact with the student to obtain a criminal background check.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Education to the reengrossed bill:

1. Relative to the requirement that any person in direct contact with a student in a release time course undergo a background check, add exception for other students in such course.
2. Require each school board that awards academic credit for a released time course to require each instructor to meet certain criteria.
3. Make technical changes.