

SENATE SUMMARY OF HOUSE AMENDMENTS**SB 112****2026 Regular Session****Hodges****KEYWORD AND SUMMARY AS RETURNED TO THE SENATE**

SCHOOLS. Provides that public school boards may adopt a policy to authorize released time for K-12 public school students, subject to parental approval. (gov sig)

SUMMARY OF HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO THE SENATE BILL

1. Adds exception for other students in the course from the requirement that any person in direct contact with a student in a release time course undergo a background check.
2. Requires each school board that awards academic credit for a released time course to require each instructor to meet certain criteria set by the school board and to report the grades, attendance, and any other information required by the school board to the school.
3. Clarifies that constitutional rights to religious liberty are protected.
4. Makes technical changes.

DIGEST OF THE SENATE BILL AS RETURNED TO THE SENATE

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 provides that nothing in proposed law is to be construed to supercede or limit the constitutional religious liberty rights granted under present law.

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))