

2019 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 321

BY REPRESENTATIVE SIMON

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

STUDENT/SCH ATTENDANCE: Authorizes school boards and chartering authorities to adopt policies relative to virtual school attendance

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:236.3, relative to school attendance; to authorize city, parish,  
3 and other local public school boards and chartering authorities to adopt policies  
4 providing for student attendance at virtual schools for purposes related to habitual  
5 absence or tardiness; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 17:236.3 is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

8 §236.3. Virtual School; definition; attendance policies

9 A. "Virtual school" means a public school, including a charter school, which  
10 has a unique site code assigned by the state Department of Education and which  
11 delivers all or a majority of the instruction provided through the internet or other  
12 electronic medium such that a student is not necessarily required to be at a specific  
13 location in order to receive instruction from a teacher. This does not preclude the  
14 ability of the school to include traditional classroom-based instruction or to host  
15 face-to-face meetings, including field trips, extracurricular activities, conferences  
16 between a student, parents, and teachers, or other related activities or events.  
17 However, a school that delivers all or a majority of the instruction provided through  
18 the internet or other electronic medium and requires students to be in daily  
19 attendance at a specified location to receive such instruction shall not be considered  
20 a virtual school.

1           B.(1) Each city, parish, or other local public school board may adopt a policy  
 2           that defines attendance at a virtual school for purposes of compliance with R.S.  
 3           17:233.

4           (2) Each chartering authority may adopt in policy or include in charter  
 5           agreements a definition of attendance at a virtual charter school which may include  
 6           provisions for addressing excessive absences, such as parental notification, student  
 7           engagement and withdrawal from the school for failure to engage, and referrals to  
 8           child welfare and attendance officers and family and juvenile courts.

### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, 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)]

HB 321 Engrossed

2019 Regular Session

Simon

**Abstract:** Authorizes the adoption of policies relative to student attendance at virtual schools.

Present law requires that a student who is habitually absent from or tardy to school be reported to the family or juvenile court as a truant child.

Present law defines a "virtual school" as a public school, including a charter school, that has a unique site code assigned by the state Dept. of Education and delivers all or a majority of instruction through the internet or other electronic medium such that a student is not necessarily required to be at a specific location in order to receive instruction from a teacher. Proposed law adds the following relative to defining attendance at virtual schools:

- (1) Authorizes each local public school board to adopt a policy defining attendance for purposes of compliance with present law relative to students who are habitually absent or tardy.
- (2) Authorizes each chartering authority to adopt in policy or include in charter agreements a definition of attendance, which may include provisions for addressing excessive absences, such as parental notification, student engagement and withdrawal from the school for failure to engage, and referrals to child welfare and attendance officers and family or juvenile courts.

(Amends R.S. 17:236.3)

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

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

1. Add provisions relative to student engagement to the illustrative list of provisions that a chartering authority may include in policies or charter agreements relative to addressing excessive absences.