

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 528

BY REPRESENTATIVE GAROFALO

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

SCHOOLS: Authorizes a pilot program implementing a balanced calendar at certain schools

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:154.5, relative to length of school year; to provide for a pilot program for
3 a balanced calendar school year; to provide for program funding; to provide for the
4 authority and responsibilities of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary
5 Education and the state Department of Education; to provide for participation in the
6 pilot program; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:154.5 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

9 §154.5. Balanced calendar; pilot program

10 A. As used in this section, "balanced calendar" means a school year which
11 deviates from the traditional nine-month school calendar and redistributes the
12 minimum instructional days over eleven months and includes intersession periods
13 that may be used to support student learning and well-being.

14 B. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state
15 Department of Education shall implement a pilot program, for the purposes of
16 reviewing a balanced calendar school year, as follows:

17 (1) The department shall identify public school governing authorities that are
18 interested in adopting a balanced calendar.

1 (2) The department may use COVID-19 federal stimulus funds to provide
2 grants to assist governing authorities in adopting a balanced calendar if such funds
3 are appropriated for that purpose.

4 (3) Public school governing authorities which adopt a balanced calendar may
5 add additional instructional time to each month, schedule intersession periods, and
6 use other resources to improve student outcomes.

7 C. The board shall adopt rules for implementation of this Section.

8 D. The department shall report to the House Committee on Education and
9 the Senate Committee on Education not later than thirty days prior to the regular
10 session of the legislature annually. Such report shall include recommendations for
11 legislation that addresses issues that may arise in supporting a balanced calendar
12 school year.

13 Section 2. A balanced calendar may be implemented pursuant to this Act beginning
14 in the 2022-2023 school year or thereafter.

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 528 Original

2021 Regular Session

Garofalo

Abstract: Authorizes a balanced calendar pilot program for public schools.

Present law provides for a minimum school day, consisting of at least 360 minutes of instructional time. Requires a school year consist of 172 days of instruction.

Present law provides that any governing authority of a public elementary or secondary school may authorize some or all of its schools to modify the total number of instructional minutes per day and instructional days per year as long as the total number of instructional minutes per year is no less than the minimum number of minutes required by present law.

Proposed law authorizes a balanced calendar school year pilot program for public school governing authorities that are interested in a balanced calendar.

Proposed law defines "balanced calendar" as a school year calendar that includes:

- (1) School being in session for at least 11 months out of a calendar year.
- (2) Intersession periods, as deemed necessary.

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

Proposed law requires the Dept. of Education to submit a report to the legislative education committees, which shall include any recommendations for legislation for support of a balanced calendar school year outside of the pilot program.

(Adds R.S. 17:154.5)