

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 381

BY REPRESENTATIVE LAFLEUR

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

TEXTBOOKS/MATERIALS: Creates the Affordable Digital Textbook and Learning Materials Subscription Pilot Program

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 17:3129.8 and to repeal R.S. 17:3129.8, relative to textbooks and learning
3 materials for public postsecondary education students; to create a pilot program to
4 be implemented at certain institutions; to require the Board of Regents and the
5 management boards to collaborate relative to the pilot program; to require the Board
6 of Regents to administer the pilot program; to require the Board of Regents to report
7 to the legislature; to provide for effectiveness; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:3129.8 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §3129.8. Affordable Digital Textbook and Learning Materials Subscription Pilot
11 Program

12 A. The Board of Regents, referred to in this Section as the "board", in
13 collaboration with the public postsecondary education management boards, shall
14 develop and implement a subscription program to a platform that includes
15 unrestricted access to affordable digital textbooks, study tools, online homework
16 platforms, and other educational resources that can be used to improve student
17 outcomes.

18 B. The board shall:

19 (1) Identify and select public postsecondary education institutions for the
20 program. In selecting institutions that may participate in the program, the board shall

1 prioritize institutions with large socially and economically disadvantaged and
2 historically underrepresented student populations.

3 (2) Award participating institutions grants to provide financial assistance to
4 eligible students for the cost of participating in the program.

5 (3) Engage in a competitive bidding process to select one or more digital
6 textbook and learning materials subscription providers to be used in the program.

7 The subscription providers shall, at a minimum, provide the following:

8 (a) Unlimited access for students to the content library, digital textbooks, and
9 online learning platform.

10 (b) Faculty support resources and training.

11 (c) Targeted learning modules to provide additional student supports to
12 combat ongoing learning loss.

13 (d) Resources to help students develop necessary employability skills
14 including but not limited to financial literacy, time management, communication,
15 and goal setting.

16 (e) Career preparation resources.

17 (f) An all-inclusive price per student that is lower than the average cost a
18 student would otherwise pay for comparable resources.

19 (g) Free, twenty-four hour, United States-based technical support services
20 to subscribers and faculty.

21 C. A participating institution shall:

22 (1) Determine the eligibility criteria for a student to receive financial
23 assistance under the program.

24 (2) Prioritize providing financial assistance to economically disadvantaged
25 students.

26 (3) Use grant funds awarded pursuant to Subsection B of this Section to
27 provide financial assistance to eligible students for all or part of the cost of
28 participating in the program.

1 Section 2. R.S. 17:3129.8 is hereby repealed in its entirety.

2 Section 3. (A) Section 1 of this Act shall be implemented beginning with the 2024
3 spring semester.

4 (B) Sections 1 and 4 of this Act shall be effective on August 1, 2023.

5 (C) Section 2 of this Act shall be effective on September 2, 2026.

6 Section 4. Not later than September 1, 2026, the Board of Regents shall provide a
7 report to the governor, the president of the Senate, the speaker of the House of
8 Representatives, and the chairmen of the legislative committees on education and commerce
9 on the progress of the pilot program.

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 381 Original

2023 Regular Session

LaFleur

Abstract: Creates an affordable digital textbook and learning material pilot program for certain students at certain public postsecondary education institutions.

Proposed law requires the Bd. of Regents, in collaboration with the public postsecondary education institution management boards, to create and implement the Affordable Digital Textbook and Learning Materials Subscription Pilot Program.

Board of Regents

Proposed law requires the Bd. of Regents to do the following:

- (1) Identify institutions that may participate in the program, prioritizing institutions with large socially and economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented student populations.
- (2) Award participating institutions grants to provide financial assistance to eligible students for the cost of participating in the program.
- (3) Engage in a competitive bidding process to select one or more digital textbook and learning materials subscription providers.

Participating Institutions

Proposed law requires participating public postsecondary education institutions to do the following:

- (1) Determine the eligibility criteria for a student to receive financial assistance, prioritizing economically disadvantaged students.

- (2) Use grant funds awarded provide financial assistance to eligible students for all or part of the cost of participating in the program.

(Adds R.S. 17:3129.8; Repeals R.S. 17:3129.8)