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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, 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)]

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DIGEST

SB 65 Original

2026 Regular Session

Cathey

Present law provides that a preexisting school may be converted into a charter school. Provides that depending on the type of charter school, conversion may be subject to approval by the faculty and staff of the school and the parents of students enrolled in the school. Provides a process for the faculty and staff election and the parent and guardian election and a threshold for how approval is determined.

Proposed law retains present law except for the following revisions to the approval and election process:

For faculty and staff:

- (1) Present law provides that approval requires a favorable vote of the majority of the members of the faculty and staff, voting together each with one vote, at the preexisting school at an election held for such purpose. Proposed law specifies that approval by a simple majority of the eligible faculty and staff voting in the election is required and removes the requirement that the election be held at the preexisting school.
- (2) Present law provides that the number needed for approval shall be determined by the number of eligible employees assigned to such school on Oct. first preceding the election. Proposed law removes present law relative to the number needed for approval and instead provides that a member of the faculty and staff may vote if he is employed by or assigned to the school on the date of the election and has been employed by or assigned to the school since the first of Oct. that immediately precedes the election. Present law specifies that such faculty and staff be certified by the state board. Proposed law retains present law.
- (3) Present law provides that such an election may be repeated in any school for approval of the same or different charter proposal but that such an election may occur no more often than once in any school year. Proposed law retains present law.

For parents and guardians:

- (1) Present law provides that approval by the parents or guardians of students attending the preexisting school requires a favorable vote of the majority of the parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school at the time of the election who are voting as long as the number of votes cast equals at least 50% of the number of students. Proposed law instead provides that such approval requires a favorable vote of a simple majority of the eligible

parents or guardians voting at an election held for this purpose.

- (2) Proposed law specifies that to be eligible to vote, a parent or guardian shall be the parent or guardian of at least one child who is enrolled in the school on the date of the election.
- (3) Present law provides that there shall be one vote for each pupil enrolled in the school that may be cast by one parent or guardian for each pupil. Proposed law provides that only one parent or guardian of each student is eligible to vote, and if he is the parent or guardian of more than one student enrolled in the school, he may cast an additional vote for each such student.
- (4) Proposed law adds that elections for parents or guardians be held by secret ballot.

For all conversion elections:

- (1) Proposed law requires BESE to adopt rules for the purposes of implementing proposed law and for providing for a fair and transparent election process, including but not limited to providing for ways to protect the anonymity of voters.
- (2) Proposed law requires elections for the conversion of a preexisting school into a charter school to be conducted in accordance with these rules.

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

(Amends R.S. 17:3973(2)(b)(ii)-(iv) and 3983(C))