

2026 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 522 (Substitute of Senate Bill No. 95 by Senator Edmonds)

BY SENATOR EDMONDS

SCHOOLS. Provides for approval for charter schools that specialize in vocational and technical education to meet workforce demands for high demand and high wage jobs. (8/1/26)

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:3983(A)(2)(a)(i) and to enact R.S. 17:3983(A)(2)(a)(v) and

3 3991.2 and R.S. 51:934, relative to vocational and technical education; to provide for

4 charter schools; to authorize proposals for a vocational and technical education Type

5 2 charter school; to provide for resolutions from the State Board of Commerce and

6 Industry; to provide for definitions; to provide for enrollment; to provide for charter

7 governing authority board members; to provide for applications; to provide

8 agreements; to provide for restrictions; and to provide for related matters.

9 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

10 Section 1. R.S. 17:3983(A)(2)(a)(i) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:
11 3983(A)(2)(a)(v) and 3991.2 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §3983. Chartering process by type; eligibility; limitations; faculty approval; parental
13 approval

14 A.(1) * * *

15 (2)(a)(i) Each proposal for a Type 1 or Type 3 charter school shall first be
16 made to the local school board with jurisdiction where the school is to be located,
17 except as provided for in Item (ii), (iii), ~~or (iv)~~, **or (v)** of this Subparagraph, by

1 submitting a written proposal. The applicant shall also provide notice of application
 2 submission for a Type 1 or Type 3 charter school to the state Department of
 3 Education. If, after review as required by R.S. 17:3982, the local school board denies
 4 the proposal, or if conditions placed on the proposal by the local school board as
 5 provided in Paragraph (B)(2) of this Section are not acceptable to the chartering
 6 group, then a proposal for a Type 2 charter school may be made to the state board.

7 * * *

8 **(v) The initial proposal for a vocational and technical education charter**
 9 **school, as provided in R.S. 17:3991.2, may be made to the state board as a**
 10 **proposal for a Type 2 charter school.**

11 * * *

12 **§3991.2. Vocational and technical education charter schools; enrollment**
 13 **preferences; board membership**

14 **A. The legislature finds and declares that:**

15 **(1) The economic vitality of the state is dependent upon the education of**
 16 **its people, including its current and future workforce.**

17 **(2) The performance of Louisiana's public education system is critical in**
 18 **providing every Louisiana child with the ability to graduate, being equipped to**
 19 **enter college or the workplace, in order to obtain a rewarding and self-**
 20 **sustaining career and to contribute to society in meaningful ways.**

21 **(3) High-quality educational options are essential to the academic growth**
 22 **of Louisiana's students and the ability of the state to expand existing businesses,**
 23 **attract new businesses, and recruit and maintain a highly talented workforce.**

24 **(4) Manufacturing, industrial, technology, energy, utility, and other**
 25 **sectors are all dependent on a workforce that has vocational training and**
 26 **technical education.**

27 **(5) Providing students with access to classes or educational programs**
 28 **directly aligned with high-demand and high-wage jobs will help provide**
 29 **students with the experience and resources needed to help prepare them to be**

1 effective employees and productive citizens.

2 (6) Encouraging and enhancing innovative vocational and technical
3 school curriculum models aligned with the state's workforce needs benefits the
4 state and its students.

5 B.(1) Notwithstanding geographic or other requirements for enrollment
6 contained in this Chapter, a charter agreement may provide, initially or by
7 amendment, for enrollment of students in a vocational and technical education
8 program.

9 (2)(a) Preference may be given to students whose parent or legal
10 guardian is employed or resides within the economic sector that is designated
11 by the State Board of Commerce and Industry through a resolution of support
12 for the vocational and technical charter school, as provided in R.S. 51:934. Up
13 to fifty percent of the school's maximum enrollment may be reserved for the
14 enrollment preference.

15 (b) The charter agreement shall specify both the school's maximum
16 enrollment and the maximum proportion set aside for implementation of this
17 enrollment preference.

18 (3) In addition to the applicable requirements in R.S. 17:3991, the
19 application must be accompanied by a resolution from the State Board of
20 Commerce and Industry, as provided in R.S. 51:934, that includes the following:

21 (a) The specialty vocational and technical education classes or programs
22 to be offered by the charter school and the manner in which they are aligned
23 with high-demand and high-wage jobs or determined as STAR Jobs by
24 Louisiana Works.

25 (b) The school's maximum total enrollment, as well as the maximum
26 number of students that may be enrolled into each specialty vocational and
27 technical education class or program.

28 (c) A statement that the charter school and any vocational and technical
29 education classes or programs offered by the charter school are not aligned with

1 any corporation or business entity that is identified in R.S. 18:1505.2(L)(3).

2 (4)(a) A charter agreement may provide, initially or by amendment, for
3 board seats on its charter governing or management board to be held by various
4 industry representatives who are employed by or retired from a business
5 located within the economic sector or have served as an officer or director on
6 the board of such business. Such membership is subject to all other provisions
7 of law except those that are contrary to provisions in this Section and Chapter.

8 (b) For purposes of this Section, an industry representative may not be
9 an officer, board member, or employee of any corporation or legal entity that
10 is identified in R.S. 18:1505.2(L)(3).

11 C. For the duration of the enrollment preference specified in Paragraph
12 (B)(1) of this Section, businesses located within the economic sector may enter
13 into memorandums of understanding with the charter school and shall specify
14 the methods by which the businesses may support the charter school, including
15 but not limited to internships for students, career counseling, academic
16 tutoring, or enrichment activities.

17 D.(1) An enrollment preference pursuant to Paragraph (B)(1) of this
18 Section shall not be implemented in a way that displaces children enrolled at the
19 school at the time the charter agreement or amendment providing for the
20 preference is authorized.

21 (2) Enrollment at the school shall otherwise be as provided by this
22 Chapter.

23 E. As used in this Section, "STAR Jobs" or "Strategic Targeted Area
24 Resource Jobs" means those employment opportunities identified by the
25 Louisiana Works Commission that have high-demand, high-wage jobs and are
26 listed on the commission's website on the date of the application.

27 Section 2. R.S. 51:934 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

28 §934. Resolutions of support for vocational and technical education charter

29 schools; economic sectors

1 **A. The legislature finds and declares that:**

2 **(1) Economic development and the economic vitality of the state are**
3 **dependent upon an educated and highly trained workforce.**

4 **(2) Manufacturing, industrial, technology, energy, utility, and other**
5 **sectors are all dependent on a workforce that has vocational training and**
6 **technical education.**

7 **(3) High-quality educational options that include vocational and**
8 **technical educations are essential to the academic growth of Louisiana's**
9 **students and the ability of the state to attract businesses, maintain a highly**
10 **talented workforce, and expand existing businesses.**

11 **B. A majority of the members of the State Board of Commerce and**
12 **Industry may adopt a resolution in support of an application for a vocational**
13 **and technical education charter school, pursuant to R.S. 17:3991.2 . If the State**
14 **Board of Commerce and Industry adopts a resolution, the resolution shall**
15 **include all of the following:**

16 **(1) An economic sector where jobs require vocational and technical**
17 **education training classes and employment skills associated therewith.**

18 **(2) A list of the types of vocational and technical education training**
19 **classes or skills that are needed for employment in the economic sector.**

20 **C. Unless otherwise indicated, the following definitions shall apply to this**
21 **Section:**

22 **(1) "Economic sector" means the economic development district or the**
23 **parishes or geographic area surrounding a location where manufacturing,**
24 **industrial, technology, energy, utility, and other sector facilities are, or will be,**
25 **located that require vocational and technical education to support employment**
26 **at the facilities. However an economic sector may not be established to provide**
27 **training for a corporation identified in R.S. 18:1505.2(L)(3).**

28 **(2) "Vocational and technical education charter schools" means those**
29 **charter schools governed by R.S. 17:3991.2.**

