

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE BILL NO. 373

BY REPRESENTATIVE GUINN

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

STUDENT/SCH ATTENDANCE: Provides relative to prekindergarten instruction and age requirements at public and nonpublic elementary schools

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 17:24.8(A) and 222(A) and (C), relative to prekindergarten
3 programs at elementary schools; to authorize certain nonpublic schools to develop
4 and offer prekindergarten instruction; to provide for the minimum ages at which
5 children enter prekindergarten and first grade at public and nonpublic schools; and
6 to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 17:24.8(A) and 222(A) and (C) are hereby amended and reenacted
9 to read as follows:

10 §24.8. Prekindergarten programs

11 A. Each city, ~~and parish, or other local public school board and any approved~~
12 nonpublic elementary school may develop and offer prekindergarten instruction.

13 The youngest age at which a child may enter prekindergarten provided for by this
14 Section shall be ~~two~~ three years younger than the age required for that child to enter
15 first grade as provided by R.S. 17:222(A) ~~or, two years younger than the age~~
16 ~~required by the city or parish school board pursuant to R.S. 17:222(C).~~

17 * * *

18 §222. Age of school entrance; proof of age, race, and parentage required; exceptions

19 A. The age at which a child may enter the first grade of any public school or
20 approved nonpublic elementary school at the beginning of the ~~public~~ school session

1 shall be six years on or before September thirtieth of the calendar year in which the
2 school year begins.

3 * * *

4 ~~C.(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections A and B of this Section~~
5 ~~and except as otherwise provided by Paragraph (3) of this Subsection, each city or~~
6 ~~parish school board, through the 1995-1996 school year, may adopt, by rule, and~~
7 ~~enforce ages for entrance into first grade in the schools in its system which vary from~~
8 ~~the provisions of this Section. All children admitted into school as a result of a rule~~
9 ~~adopted pursuant to this Subsection shall be counted in reports submitted for funding~~
10 ~~under the Minimum Foundation Program and money allocated pursuant to such~~
11 ~~program shall be based on the report which includes such children.~~

12 ~~(2) Beginning with the 1996-1997 school year and thereafter and except as~~
13 ~~otherwise provided by Paragraph (3) of this Subsection, each city and parish school~~
14 ~~board shall comply with the provisions of Subsection A of this Section relative to the~~
15 ~~age at which a child may enter the first grade of any public school at the beginning~~
16 ~~of the public school session.~~

17 ~~(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of Subsections A and B of this Section,~~
18 ~~the parish school boards in Jefferson and Orleans parishes may adopt, by rule, and~~
19 ~~enforce ages for entrance into first grade in the schools in its system which vary from~~
20 ~~the provisions of this Section. All children admitted into school as a result of a rule~~
21 ~~adopted pursuant to this Subsection shall be counted in reports submitted for funding~~
22 ~~under the Minimum Foundation Program and money allocated pursuant to such~~
23 ~~program shall be based on the report which includes such children.~~

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)]

Guinn

HB No. 373

Abstract: Lowers the minimum age to enter pre-K from four to three, authorizes certain nonpublic schools to offer pre-K, and requires that a child be at least six to enter first grade at certain nonpublic schools.

Prekindergarten:

Present law authorizes public school boards to develop and offer prekindergarten instruction (pre-K). Proposed law additionally grants this authority to approved nonpublic elementary schools.

Present law provides that the minimum age for entrance into pre-K is two years younger than the minimum age to enter first grade. Present law requires a child to be six on or before Sept. 30th of the calendar year when the school year starts to enter first grade, so a child may enter pre-K at the age of four according to present law.

Proposed law, for both public and approved nonpublic schools, provides that the minimum age for pre-K entrance shall be three years younger than the minimum age to enter first grade, thus providing that a child may enter pre-K at the age of three.

First grade:

Present law (R.S. 17:222(A)) requires a child to be six years old on or before Sept. 30 of the calendar year in which the school year begins to enter first grade at any public school. Proposed law applies this same age requirement to first grade entrance at any approved nonpublic elementary school.

Present law (R.S. 17:222(C)(1) and (2)) provides for an exception to the first grade minimum age requirement through the 1995-1996 school year. Proposed law deletes present law.

(Amends R.S. 17:24.8(A) and 222(A) and (C))