

Regular Session, 2013

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 133

BY REPRESENTATIVE SCHRODER

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Department of Children and Family Services, and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study jointly the feasibility of coordinating state mental health and counseling resources for the purpose of providing supports to public school students and to submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Health and Welfare, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, the House Committee on Education, and the Senate Committee on Education not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2014 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, it is the aim of the Department of Health and Hospitals to protect and promote health and to ensure access to medical preventative and rehabilitative services for all citizens; and

WHEREAS, the vision of the Department of Children and Family Services includes keeping children safe and providing a safe refuge during disaster; and

WHEREAS, as stated in the Constitution of Louisiana, it is the goal of the public education system to provide learning environments and experiences at all stages of human development that are humane, just, and designed to promote excellence in order that every individual may be afforded an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Department of Children and Family Services, and the state Department of Education have demonstrated the value of coordinating services across the state through the implementation of such programs as the Coordinated System of Care; and

WHEREAS, each of these agencies has resources and programs designed to assist children, families, and communities in meeting mental health and counseling needs, yet each operates independently; and

WHEREAS, there is a great need for mental health and counseling services in public schools after accidents, acts of nature, and crisis situations; and

WHEREAS, coordination of available mental health and counseling services across state agencies to supplement school-based services could significantly increase supports available to Louisiana school children; and

WHEREAS, opportunities for aligning specific state mental health and counseling resources with the needs of public school students must be explored fully; and

WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the state's constitutional duty of affording every student an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential, it is imperative that mental health and counseling resources available for public school students receive a thorough and collaborative evaluation so that determinations can be made as to how the state can best provide experiences and opportunities to students that help them succeed in all aspects of life.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Department of Children and Family Services, and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study jointly the feasibility of coordinating state mental health and counseling resources for the purpose of providing supports to public school students and to submit a written report of findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Health and Welfare, the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare, the House Committee on Education, and the Senate Committee on Education not later than sixty days prior to the beginning of the 2014 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such report shall include but not be limited to the following elements:

(1) Identification of the resources that the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Department of Children and Family Services, and the state Department of Education offer across the state that could serve to meet the mental health and counseling needs of public school students.

(2) Recommendations relative to opportunities for aligning available state mental health and counseling resources with student needs.

(3) Recommendations, if any, relative to legislation necessary to remove obstacles currently preventing agency collaboration and the utilization of available resources to supplement the mental health and counseling supports being provided to public school students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, the secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services, the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the state superintendent of education.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE