

Present law provides for the La. Competency-Based Education Program, including the development and implementation of statewide content standards for required subjects and the La. Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) by the state Dept. of Education with approval of the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Defines "statewide content standards for required subjects" as statements that define what a student should know or be able to accomplish at the end of a specific time period or grade level or at the completion of a course. Proposed law would have revised this definition to provide for what "La. public elementary and secondary students" rather than what "a student" should know or be able to accomplish and otherwise would have retained present law.

Present law requires standards-based assessments for required subjects (English language arts, math, science, and social studies) to be implemented by BESE and administered in at least grades three through 11. Provides that such assessments be based on state content standards and rigorous student achievement standards comparable to national student achievement levels. Requires that the rigor of assessments at least compare to that of national achievement tests. Requires, beginning with the 2014-15 school year, that the standards-based assessments in English language arts and math be based on nationally recognized content standards. Requires BESE to establish the adequate test scores for determining successful student performance on the tests. Proposed law would have retained present law and additionally would have required BESE to do the following:

- (1) Collect statewide results from assessments administered to students in 2014-15 and 2015-16 in order to define the basis for student achievement expectations to be used in the school and district accountability system.
- (2) Comply with federal and state law in reporting student results from such assessments.
- (3) Provide aggregate results from such assessments to an appropriately qualified faculty member at a La. postsecondary education institution to analyze student performance and advise BESE on the basis for achievement expectations.

Proposed law, for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years, would have:

- (1) Required BESE to use the statewide results from the assessments administered in these school years as the basis for a distribution of school and district letter grades that could not have varied from the distribution of letter grades resulting from the 2012-13 assessment results unless schools or districts improved in their performance such that the overall distribution of letter grades was better than the 2012-13 distribution.
- (2) Required BESE, after assigning letter grades: (a) to establish an academic support plan for each public school that would have concluded its third consecutive year of academic failure; (b) to require a change in school governance only after such a plan had been implemented in the school for at least one year.
- (3) Prohibited BESE from using the results of such assessments to require the use of value-added data in the evaluation of educators. Would have allowed BESE to promulgate rules to ensure that local public school systems had an accurate basis for measuring student growth in the absence of such data.

Proposed law would have required BESE, beginning with the 2016-17 school year, to use the results of the assessments as the basis for student achievement expectations in the school and district accountability system and in value-added analysis. Further would have required BESE to use such assessments based on nationally competitive standards to establish a statewide performance goal to be reached by 2025 and use such a goal as the basis for school and performance expectations.

(Proposed to amend R.S. 17:24.4(A)(4) and (F)(1); Proposed to add R.S. 17:24.4(F)(2))

VETO MESSAGE:

"House Bill No. 953 would significantly impair parents' ability to have clear information about the performance of their child's school and teachers' ability to have meaningful feedback. The bill sacrifices the important education reforms supported by this Legislature in 2010 and 2012 in order to implement a set of national standards and tests that take away local control and standardize our education system.

"Louisiana needs to raise the academic performance of our students so we can compete in the 21st century, but not at the expense of handing away our school system to the federal government through Common Core and PARCC, and sacrificing the important reforms that empower parents to choose the best school for their children.

"The opposition to this bill has come from both sides of the Common Core issue. The Louisiana Association of Business and Industry, Louisiana Federation for Children, Black Alliance for Educational Options, Stand for Children, Louisiana Association of Charter Schools, and the Council for a Better Louisiana opposed the bill during the Legislative session because it delays reform and deprives our children of high quality teachers, accountable administrators, and clear information about the performance of their schools. Others opposed the bill for enshrining Louisiana's participation in Common Core and PARCC. The Louisiana School Boards Association, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, and the Louisiana Association of Educators also opposed the bill during the session. They are joined by countless parents who have requested a veto.

"Given the widespread opposition and the gravity of any decision that affects our children, I have vetoed House Bill No. 953 and hereby return it to the House of Representatives."