

ACT No. 196

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 280

BY REPRESENTATIVE EDMONDS

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AN ACT

To amend and reenact R.S. 17:4021(A) and to enact R.S. 17:4015(10), 4021(D), and 4021.1, relative to the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program; to provide for the state Department of Education's responsibilities in administering the program; to revise the eligibility criteria schools must meet in order to participate in the program; to remove the enrollment cap applicable to certain schools; to provide for applicability; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 17:4021(A) is hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 17:4015(10), 4021(D), and 4021.1 are hereby enacted to read as follows:

§4015. Program administration

In administering the program pursuant to this Part, the department shall:

* * *

(10) Conduct site visits each school year in order to observe the learning environment at schools that fail to meet minimum standards for academic performance as determined by the accountability system provided for in state board policy or that are otherwise not in good standing with respect to the program.

* * *

1 §4021. School eligibility

2 A. To be eligible to participate in the program, a nonpublic school shall meet
3 all of the following criteria:

4 (1) ~~Be approved, provisionally approved, or probationally approved~~ by the
5 State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education pursuant to R.S. 17:11.

6 (2) Comply with the criteria set forth in *Brumfield, et al. v. Dodd, et al.* 425
7 F. Supp. 528.

8 (3)(a) ~~Enrollment of scholarship recipients in a participating school that has~~
9 ~~been approved, provisionally approved, or probationally approved for less than two~~
10 ~~years shall not exceed twenty percent of such school's total student enrollment. Be~~
11 ~~accredited or designated as a provisionally accredited approved school. For purposes~~
12 ~~of this Paragraph:~~

13 (i) "Provisionally accredited approved school" means a school that is working
14 toward meeting accreditation requirements and has met all other criteria for approval
15 by the state board.

16 (ii) Accrediting entities shall be the Southern Association of Colleges and
17 Schools accreditation organizations, the Cognia accreditation organizations, the
18 National Association of Independent Schools accreditation organizations, the
19 Louisiana Montessori Association, and the diocese or archdiocese in which the
20 school is located.

21 (b) A provisionally accredited approved school shall be removed from the
22 program if it does not receive accreditation within four years.

23 * * *

24 D. A participating school that fails for three consecutive years to meet
25 minimum standards for academic performance as determined by the accountability
26 system provided for in state board policy shall be ineligible to participate in the
27 program.

28 §4021.1. School eligibility; exceptions; applicability

29 A. R.S. 17:4021(A)(3) shall not apply to a nonpublic school initially
30 participating in the program prior to the 2022-2023 school year.

1 B. The measurement of three consecutive years for purposes of R.S.
2 17:4021(D) shall commence with the 2021-2022 school year.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____