

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 693

BY REPRESENTATIVE NORTON

SCHOOLS/BOARDS: Creates a legislative advisory task force on conducting of school board meetings

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Chapter 21 of Title 24 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised
3 of R.S. 24:991 through 994, relative to meetings of public school boards; to create
4 a commission to study the operation and management of school board meetings; to
5 provide for the composition and duties of the commission; and to provide for related
6 matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. Chapter 21 of Title 24 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950,
9 comprised of R.S. 24:991 through 994, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 CHAPTER 21. LOUISIANA COMMISSION ON PUBLIC MEETINGS

11 OF SCHOOL BOARDS

12 §991. Legislative findings

13 A. The legislature recognizes that access and input to decisionmaking by
14 public bodies, including school boards, is an important part of the American
15 democratic system. The legislature also recognizes the value to school governance
16 of public comment on educational issues and the importance of involving members
17 of the public in school board meetings. The legislature further recognizes that it is
18 a school board's responsibility, in properly governing the schools under its
19 jurisdiction, to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner.

1 B. The legislature finds that it is imperative that school board meetings are
2 conducted in the most fair and effective manner possible and that they exhibit high
3 standards of public civility and decorum.

4 C. The legislature further finds that school board meetings should serve as
5 examples of civil democracy for students and others to emulate and that encouraging
6 the community to attend and participate in school board meetings is the best way to
7 achieve this.

8 §992. Louisiana Commission on Public Meetings of School Boards; creation;
9 purpose

10 A. The Louisiana Commission on Public Meetings of School Boards,
11 hereinafter referred to as "commission", is hereby established as an advisory
12 legislative agency.

13 B. The purpose of the commission is to determine the levels of civility and
14 effectiveness in the manner in which public school board meetings are being
15 conducted and to contribute to raising those levels through the sharing of information
16 and advocacy.

17 §993. Membership; meetings; compensation; staff

18 A. The commission shall consist of the following members:

19 (1) The speaker of the House of Representatives, or his designee.

20 (2) The president of the Senate, or his designee.

21 (3) The chairman of the House Committee on Education, or his designee.

22 (4) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Education, or his designee.

23 (5) The state superintendent of education, or his designee.

24 (6) The president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary
25 Education, or his designee.

26 (7) One local school superintendent, appointed by the Louisiana Association
27 of School Superintendents.

28 (8) Three members of public school boards appointed by the Louisiana
29 School Boards Association.

1 (9) One classroom teacher appointed by the Louisiana Federation of
2 Teachers.

3 (10) One classroom teacher appointed by the Louisiana Association of
4 Educators.

5 (11) One classroom teacher appointed by the Associated Professional
6 Educators of Louisiana.

7 (12) Three parents of children in public elementary or secondary schools
8 appointed by the Louisiana Parent Teacher Association.

9 (13) One member with expertise in the Open Meetings Law appointed by the
10 attorney general.

11 B. The members of the commission shall elect a chairman, vice chairman,
12 and such other officers as it shall determine.

13 C. A member of the commission shall serve without compensation for his
14 services, but may receive a per diem and be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary
15 travel and other expenses actually incurred on business of the commission provided
16 such reimbursement is authorized and paid by the representative agency or
17 organization.

18 D. The commission shall hold at least two meetings each year and may hold
19 other meetings upon the call of the chairman or a majority of the members. The
20 initial meeting of the commission shall be called by the president of the Senate and
21 the speaker of the House of Representatives, acting jointly.

22 E. Staff and facilities needed by the commission to accomplish its purposes
23 shall be provided by the legislature from its existing resources.

24 §994. Powers and functions

25 The commission shall:

26 (1) Investigate how public meetings of school boards are being conducted
27 by attending such meetings and by receiving testimony of individuals who have
28 participated in such meetings.

- 1 (2) Evaluate the conduct of such meetings for compliance with the Open
2 Meetings Law and the degree to which they exhibit high standards of public civility
3 and decorum.
- 4 (3) Share findings with all appropriate public entities and civic organizations.
- 5 (4) Report to the legislature its recommendations for necessary policy
6 changes.
- 7 (5) Identify best practices that school boards can implement in their meetings
8 such that such meetings can serve as examples of civil democracy for students and
9 others to emulate.
- 10 (6) Take any action it deems appropriate and beneficial to achieving its
11 purpose.

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)]

HB 693 Original

2018 Regular Session

Norton

Abstract: Creates the La. Commission on Public Meetings of School Boards.

Proposed law establishes the La. Commission on Public Meetings of School Boards as an advisory legislative agency. Provides that the purpose of the commission is to determine the levels of civility and effectiveness in the manner in which public school board meetings are being conducted and to contribute to raising those levels through the sharing of information and advocacy.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall consist of the following members:

- (1) The speaker of the House of Representatives, or his designee.
- (2) The president of the Senate, or his designee.
- (3) The chairman of the House Committee on Education, or his designee.
- (4) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Education, or his designee.
- (5) The state superintendent of education, or his designee.
- (6) The president of the State Bd. of Elementary and Secondary Education, or his designee.
- (7) One local school superintendent, appointed by the La. Assoc. of School Superintendents.
- (8) Three members of public school boards appointed by the La. School Boards Assoc.

- (9) One classroom teacher appointed by the La. Federation of Teachers.
- (10) One classroom teacher appointed by the La. Assoc. of Educators.
- (11) One classroom teacher appointed by the Associated Professional Educators of America.
- (12) Three parents of children in public elementary or secondary schools appointed by the La. Parent Teacher Assoc.
- (13) One member with expertise in the Open Meetings Law appointed by the attorney general.

Proposed law requires that the members of the commission elect a chairman, vice chairman, and other officers as it shall determine.

Proposed law provides that a member of the commission shall serve without compensation. Further provides that a member may receive a per diem and be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary travel and other expenses actually incurred on business of the commission provided such reimbursement is authorized and paid by the representative agency or organization.

Proposed law requires commission to hold at least two meetings each year and authorizes commission to hold other meetings upon the call of the chairman or majority of the members. Further provides that the initial meeting be called by the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives, acting jointly.

Proposed law provides that staff and facilities needed by the commission to accomplish its purposes shall be provided by the legislature from its existing resources.

Proposed law provides for the powers and functions of the commission. Provides that the commission shall do the following:

- (1) Investigate how public meetings of school boards are being conducted by attending such meetings and by receiving testimony of individuals who have participated in such meetings.
- (2) Evaluate the conduct of such meetings for compliance with present law (the Open Meetings Law) and the degree to which they exhibit high standards of public civility and decorum.
- (3) Share findings with all appropriate public entities and civic organizations.
- (4) Report to the legislature its recommendations for necessary policy changes.
- (5) Identify best practices that school boards can implement in their meetings such that such meetings can serve as examples of civil democracy for students and others to emulate.
- (6) Take any action it deems appropriate and beneficial to achieving its purpose.

(Adds R.S. 24:991-994)