

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 153

BY SENATOR NEVERS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Education and the Board of Regents to jointly study how to appropriately align the Career Diploma requirements and qualifying for a TOPS-Tech award.

WHEREAS, only twenty-eight percent of Louisiana high school students achieve a two-year or four-year degree; and

WHEREAS, while most Louisiana jobs do not require a four-year college degree, the majority of jobs do require advanced credentials that come with an education after high school; and

WHEREAS, too few young adults in Louisiana have the skills and credentials to assume the high-wage jobs offered in today's economy; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana needs a state-of-the-art system of career and technical education provided by high schools, community colleges, and employers themselves in order to provide the skilled work force demanded by Louisiana businesses; and

WHEREAS, just one percent of high school graduates in Louisiana earn a Career Diploma, largely due to a stigma resulting from fundamental misconceptions about career education; and

WHEREAS, the Jump Start program encourages school districts, colleges, and businesses to collaborate in providing career courses and workplace experiences to high school students, while seeking to end the long-standing stigma against career education; and

WHEREAS, the 2014-2015 MFP Task Force issued two proposals regarding career education by seeking to double the career education funding weight for courses in high wage, high growth fields, and providing a subsidy for districts enrolling high school students in approved career courses and college credit course outside of their high school course work; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Education and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education support the greater use of TOPS-Tech and TOPS-Tech Early Start

funds for students seeking Jump Start credentials in community and technical college settings, or in other settings outside of the traditional high school; and

WHEREAS, increased coordination between the Department of Education and the Board of Regents would assist with the implementation of these goals.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Education and the Board of Regents to jointly study how to appropriately align the Career Diploma requirements and qualifying for a TOPS-Tech award.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a written report of their findings be submitted to the Senate Committee on Education no later than February 1, 2015.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the president of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the superintendent of education, the commissioner of higher education, and the chairman of the Board of Regents.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE