

2022 Regular Session

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 196

BY SENATOR HENRY

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. Urges and requests the Board of Regents and the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to include computer coding and American Sign Language as course equivalents for TOPS core curriculum and high school graduation requirements.

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Board of Regents and the state Board of Elementary and Secondary
3 Education to study collaboratively the feasibility and advisability of allowing
4 computer coding and American Sign Language to substitute for Foreign Language
5 for purposes of satisfying requirements relative to qualification for Taylor
6 Opportunity Program for Students awards and high school graduation and submit
7 jointly a written report of findings and conclusions, including any recommendations
8 for related legislation, to the Senate Committee on Education and the House
9 Committee on Education by March 10, 2023.

10 WHEREAS, the Constitution of Louisiana provides that it is the goal of the state's
11 public educational system to afford every individual an equal opportunity to develop to his
12 full potential; and

13 WHEREAS, computer coding is a dynamic and challenging high school course that
14 provides an excellent foundation for students interested in pursuing further studies and
15 high-demand, high-wage careers in technology-related fields; and

16 WHEREAS, just as many world languages exist, there is an extensive number of
17 computer coding languages that a programmer may use to communicate with a computer,
18 and these skills are increasingly important in a technologically advanced world economy;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, American Sign Language is equally as important as traditional Foreign
3 Language in that it teaches students the skills to communicate with people in different ways
4 and gives students an advantage in the workforce; and

5 WHEREAS, American Sign Language is already considered a foreign language for
6 receiving the State Seal of Biliteracy as provided in R.S. 17:273.4; and

7 WHEREAS, some students who are particularly interested in learning the skills
8 offered in computer coding courses or American Sign Language courses would like the
9 option of taking these courses instead of a traditional Foreign Language to count for credit
10 toward satisfying requirements for high school graduation and Taylor Opportunity Program
11 for Students (TOPS) award qualification, but that is not currently an option; and

12 WHEREAS, computer coding and American Sign Language are not listed as courses
13 that a student can take to fulfill requirements for high school graduation; and

14 WHEREAS, in 2019, at least fourteen states allowed students to receive Foreign
15 Language credits for courses other than foreign language, including courses in computer
16 coding; and

17 WHEREAS, graduation requirements are set in the state Board of Elementary and
18 Secondary Education policy, except for graduation requirements for a career diploma, which
19 are set in state law; TOPS core curricula requirements are also provided in state law, thus,
20 amendments of such laws should be considered; and

21 WHEREAS, there has been a move in recent years to align high school graduation
22 requirements with TOPS core curricula requirements, thus, any revisions of these
23 requirements should be made in concert; and

24 WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the state's constitutional duty of affording every
25 student an equal opportunity to develop to his full potential, it is appropriate that the
26 feasibility and advisability of allowing computer coding and American Sign Language to
27 substitute for Foreign Language for purposes of satisfying requirements relative to
28 qualification for TOPS awards and high school graduation receive a thorough evaluation.

29 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana
30 does hereby urge and request the Board of Regents and the state Board of Elementary and

1 Secondary Education to study collaboratively the feasibility and advisability of allowing
2 computer coding and American Sign Language to substitute for Foreign Language for
3 purposes of satisfying requirements relative to qualification for Taylor Opportunity Program
4 for Students awards and high school graduation and submit jointly a written report of
5 findings and conclusions, including any recommendations for related legislation, to the
6 Senate Committee on Education and the House Committee on Education by March 10, 2023.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
8 chairman of the Board of Regents and the president of the state Board of Elementary and
9 Secondary Education.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Cheryl Serrett.

SR 196 Original

DIGEST
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Henry

Urges and requests the Board of Regents and the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study collaboratively the feasibility and advisability of allowing computer coding and American Sign Language to count as substitutes for Foreign Language for purposes of satisfying requirements relative to qualification for Taylor Opportunity Program for Students awards and high school graduation and submit jointly a written report of findings and conclusions, including any recommendations for related legislation, to the Senate and House committees on education.