

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2025 Regular Session
April 16, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair
Representative Beryl A. Amedée, vice chair
Representative Kendricks "Ken" Brass
Representative Josh Carlson
Representative Barbara W. Carpenter
Representative Kim Carver
Representative Kathy Edmonston
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver
Representative Sylvia Elaine Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Rashid Armand Young

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elizabeth L. Borné, legislative analyst
Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst
Alexandra Cravins, committee administrative assistant
Hayden McGlothin, clerk

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Myrtis Jarrell, sergeant at arms

III. BUSINESS

House Bill No. 566 by Representative Turner

Representative Turner presented House Bill No. 566, which establishes job order contracting as an alternative project delivery method applicable to deferred maintenance of public facilities by post-secondary educational institutions for certain work types.

Representative Schlegel offered technical amendments to House Bill No. 566. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Anzilla Gilmore, Louisiana State University, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 566.

Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 566 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 566 was reported with amendments by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 77 by Representative Turner

Representative Turner presented House Bill No. 77, which revises Taylor Opportunity Program for Students award amounts and adds an award category for students with an ACT score of 31 or above.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 77 that lowered the amount of Excellence award at public institutions from \$12,000 to \$11,300, and provided a stipend of \$350 per semester / \$700 per academic year for students who qualify for an Opportunity, Performance, Honors, or Excellence Award and are enrolled at LSU-Baton Rouge or LSU Health Sciences Center-New Orleans. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments, to which Representative Tarver objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 1 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, and Taylor voted yea. Representative Tarver voted nay.

Walker Pearson, Louisiana Tech University, 5237 Rue Notre Dame, Alexandria, LA 71303, spoke in support of House Bill No. 77.

Drew Brown, McNeese State University, 5383 Weaver Road, Lake Charles, LA 70605, spoke in support of House Bill No. 77.

Phyllis M. Taylor, Patrick F. Taylor Foundation, 612 Andrew Higgins, 4th Floor, New Orleans, LA 70130, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 77.

Dr. James Callier, Taylor Foundation, New Orleans, LA, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 77.

Wade Rousse, no address provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 77.

Representative Schlegel offered a motion to report House Bill No. 77 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 77 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 8 in support, and 2 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 77.

House Bill No. 372 by Representative Hughes

Representative Hughes presented House Bill No. 372, which provides relative to computer science as a high school graduation requirement.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 372 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 372 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 5 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 161 by Representative Hughes

Representative Hughes presented House Bill No. 161, which aligns programs to which TOPS Tech and TOPS Tech Early Start awards may apply with the M.J. Foster Promise Program qualified programs.

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, Louisiana Board of Regents, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, distributed a handout, "Louisiana Board of Regents TOPS Information Packet", which is included in the committee records and labeled Exhibit C.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 161 that added an initial eligibility option for a student to qualify for TOPS-Tech Early Start Award in lieu of certain scores on the ACT Plan or WorkKeys: meet the eligibility requirements for technical dual enrollment courses; and specified that the advisory council created by present law is required to identify programs in which an eligible student may enroll to receive a TOPS-Tech or TOPS-Tech Early Start award, instead of the eligible programs for such awards being the equivalent of qualified programs for the M.J. Foster Promise Program awards. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 161 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 161 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 6 in support, and 2 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 373 by Representative Hughes

Representative Hughes presented House Bill No. 373, which requires the Workforce Investment Council to perform an annual return on investment analysis relative to industry-based credentials earned in high school and provides for student data collection and sharing for this purpose.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 373 that required Louisiana Workforce Commission rather than Louisiana Workforce Investment Council to conduct the ROI analysis, and provided that social security numbers shared with the department by school governing authorities be matched to the corresponding student names and unique student identification numbers. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

James Garvey, no witness card provided, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 373.

Representative Carpenter offered a motion to report House Bill No. 373 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 373 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays.

Representatives Schlegel, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 11 in support, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 275 by Representative Berault

Representative Berault presented House Bill No. 275, which authorizes students who qualify for a TOPS award but graduate from an out-of-state college to apply unused award amounts to medical or dental school in Louisiana and requires repayment unless certain conditions are met. Representative Berault provided a handout, "Louisiana Physician Shortage Facts", Exhibit D, which is included in the committee records.

Kathryn Mayeaux, 1029 Mariners Cove Boulevard, Slidell, LA 70458, spoke in support of House Bill No. 275.

Misti Cordell, Board of Regents, 1201 North Third St, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 275.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report House Bill No. 275 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 275 was reported favorably by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carpenter, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 17 in support, and 3 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 327 by Representative Chassion

Representative Chassion presented House Bill No. 327, which requires schools to use a 10-point grading scale to assign grades used in the calculation of the minimum grade point average required for initial award eligibility.

Representative Taylor offered a motion to report House Bill No. 327 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 327 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support, and 1 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 327.

House Bill No. 70 by Representative Brass

Representative Brass presented House Bill No. 70, which revises initial academic eligibility requirements for a TOPS-Tech award.

Representative Brass offered amendments to House Bill No. 70 that included a reference to the present law provision that requires a minimum ACT score of 19 for graduates of approved home study programs for TOPS-Tech qualification. Representative Brass offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Dr. Sujuan Boutte, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance, 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 70.

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, Board of Regents, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 70.

Dr. Tristan Denley, Board of Regents, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 70.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report House Bill No. 70 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 70 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carpenter, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 9 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 71 by Representative Brass

Representative Brass presented House Bill No. 71, which revises the membership of the Dual Enrollment Task Force.

Representative Amedée offered amendments to House Bill No. 71 that removed the task force member representing Education Trust in Louisiana and added the chief executive officer of the Pelican Institute for Public Policy. Representative Amedée offered a motion to adopt the proposed amendments, to which Representative Taylor objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and the amendments were adopted by a vote of 7 yeas and 3 nays. Representatives Amedée, Carlson,

Carver, Edmonston, Owen, St. Blanc, and Tarver voted yea. Representatives Brass, Freiberg, and Taylor voted nay. Representative Schlegel abstained.

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, Board of Regents, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 71.

Tramelle Howard, The Education Trust, 920 Poeyfarre Street, city and state not provided, spoke in support of House Bill No. 71.

Representative Brass offered a motion to report House Bill No. 71 with amendments. Without objection, House Bill No. 71 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 1 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Update on the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) from Dr. Sujuan Boutté', executive director of the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance

Dr. Sujuan Boutté, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance, 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only, and provided the following handouts, which are included in the committee records:

- "TOPS Recipients by District", Exhibit A
- "In Focus: Taylor Opportunity Program for Students", Exhibit B

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Edmonston offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Brass, Carlson, Carver, Edmonston, Freiberg, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Schlegel', written in a cursive style.

Chair Laurie Schlegel
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: March 18, 2026