

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2026 Regular Session
April 14, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Laurie Schlegel, chair of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 9:07 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 Reese "Skip" Broussard
Representative Josh Carlson
Representative Kim Carver
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Chasity Martinez
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver
Representative Sylvia Elaine Taylor

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Barbara W. Carpenter
Representative Kathy Edmonston
Representative Terry Landry, Jr.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elizabeth L. Borne, legislative analyst
Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst
Alexandra Cravins, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Chance Simpson, committee clerk
Rebecca Marshall, sergeant at arms

III. BUSINESS

House Resolution No. 17 by Representative Turner

Representative Turner presented House Resolution No. 17, which directs the Board of Regents, Louisiana Works, and Louisiana Economic Development to study the state's return on investment with respect to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students in collaboration with the Kathleen Babineaux Blanco Public Policy Center, and provided a handout, "Study of Return on Investment", Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Resolution No. 17 that:

1. Changed the report deadline from March 1, 2027, to February 15, 2027.
2. Added the House Committee on Appropriations and the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations as report recipients.
3. Provided for the agencies to use information provided by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance when conducting the study.
4. Added that the report may be incorporated into the 2027 Launch Louisiana report by the Blanco Center for LA FIRST.
5. Provided for the study to include a comparative analysis of the largest state-funded student financial assistance programs.

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, Amedée, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, Martinez, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Andrew Fitzgerald, Greater Baton Rouge Economic Partnership, 564 Laurel Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Resolution No. 17.

Barry Erwin, Leaders for a Better Louisiana, 450 Laurel Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Resolution No. 17, and provided a handout, "2026 Legislative Session Offers Opportunity to Review TOPS and Financial Aid", Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Stephen Barnes, Kathleen Blanco Public Policy Center, 400 East St. Mary Boulevard, Lafayette, LA 70503, spoke for information only on House Resolution No. 17.

Mary Beth Derrickson, Louisiana Association of Business & Industry, 500 Main Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70801, spoke in support of House Resolution No. 17.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Resolution No. 17 with amendments. Without objection, House Resolution No. 17 was reported with amendments by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, Martinez, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 4 in support, and 1 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 385 by Representative Bamburg

Representative Bamburg presented House Bill No. 385, which provides, under specified circumstances, for repayment of a Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) award.

James A. Callier, 140 Nickerson Parkway, Lafayette, LA 70501, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 385.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments to House Bill No. 385 that exempted the following students from the repayment requirement:

- (1) A student who initially qualified for an Honors or Excellence award.
- (2) A student who enrolls during or immediately following the semester of the suspension or cancellation at an institution under the supervision and management of the Board of Supervisors of Community and Technical Colleges in certain high-wage, high-demand programs.

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, Amedée, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, Martinez, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Representative Carlson offered a motion to report House Bill No. 385 with amendments, to which Representative Taylor objected. The administrative assistant called the roll, and House Bill No. 385 was reported with amendments by a vote of 6 yeas and 5 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Owen, and Tarver voted yea. Representatives Amedée, Freiberg, Martinez, St. Blanc, and Taylor voted nay.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 385.

House Bill No. 1058 by Representative Bamburg

Representative Bamburg presented House Bill No. 1058, which requires the Board of Regents to establish and maintain a data administration system for the collection of uniform data on all state financial assistance.

Eric Turner, Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, P.O. Box 3332, Baton Rouge, LA, spoke in support of House Bill No. 1058.

Representative Carver offered a motion to report House Bill No. 1058 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 1058 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, Martinez, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 406 by Representative Mike Johnson

Representative Mike Johnson presented House Bill No. 406, which requires the state Department of Education to conduct a study and issue a report relative to interscholastic high school athletics.

Representative Taylor offered a motion to report House Bill No. 406 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 406 was reported favorably by a vote of 11 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, Martinez, Owen, St. Blanc, Tarver, and Taylor voted yea.

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

House Bill No. 787 by Representative McMakin

Representative McMakin presented House Bill No. 787, which removes successful completion of a computer science course as a requirement for TOPS qualification.

Ashley Townsend, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 787.

Tom Costanza, Louisiana Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2431 South Acadian Thruway, Suite 250, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke in support of House Bill No. 787.

Representative Schlegel offered amendments in the form of a substitute bill. Representative Schlegel offered a motion to adopt the substitute bill. Without objection, the amendments were adopted by a vote of 10 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, Martinez, Owen, St. Blanc, and Taylor voted yea.

Representative Schlegel announced that action on House Bill No. 787 was voluntarily deferred.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 7 in opposition. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

House Bill No. 1059 by Representative Broussard

Representative Broussard presented House Bill No. 1059, which provides relative to core curriculum requirements for TOPS and TOPS-Tech awards in the subject of mathematics and provided a handout, "TOPS Core Curriculum Alignment with High School Math Options", Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records.

Ashley Townsend, Louisiana Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, spoke for information only on House Bill No. 1059.

Representative Freiberg offered a motion to report House Bill No. 1059 favorably. Without objection, House Bill No. 1059 was reported favorably by a vote of 8 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Amedée, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, Martinez, and Taylor voted yea.

Witness cards submitted by those who did not speak are as follows: 2 in support. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 1059.

House Bill No. 1021 by Representative Egan

House Bill No. 1021 provides relative to repayment of certain TOPS award amounts under certain circumstances.

James Callier, 140 Nickerson Parkway, Zachary, LA 70501, spoke in opposition to House Bill No. 1021.

Representative Schlegel announced that action on House Bill No. 1021 was voluntarily deferred.

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

Prepared statements were received via email for House Bill No. 1021.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Ramesh Kolluru, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, no witness card provided, gave introductory remarks to the committee.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Carver offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 7 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Schlegel, Broussard, Carlson, Carver, Freiberg, St. Blanc, and Taylor voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chair Laurie Schlegel
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: