
DIGEST

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Hoffmann

HB No. 116

Abstract: Provides relative to textbooks and other instructional materials for elementary and secondary schools; shifts responsibility for selecting textbooks from the state to the local level.

BESE's general role in the textbook selection and distribution process

Present law requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to prescribe and adopt and exercise control and supervision over the distribution and use of free school books and other materials of instruction, including their approval, for use in public schools. Proposed law instead requires BESE to prescribe through rules and regulations the adoption of textbooks and other materials of instruction by the governing authority of each public elementary and secondary school, including special schools.

Present law requires the state superintendent of education to prepare the list of free school books and other materials of instruction for BESE adoption. Proposed law repeals present law.

Present constitution requires the legislature to appropriate funds to supply free school books and materials prescribed by BESE.

Proposed law prohibits BESE from limiting the amount or percentage of state or local funds the local governing authority may spend on textbooks and materials.

Review of textbooks by state Dept. of Education

Proposed law requires the state Dept. of Education (DOE), subject to the availability of funds, to offer a review service of textbooks and other instructional materials for alignment to state content standards. Requires that reviews be made publicly available through the DOE website.

Review and inspection of textbooks by public

Present law requires that textbooks and materials be made available for public inspection at DOE during regular office hours. Provides for textbook review procedures, including citizen participation, the composition of textbook committees, and the placement of proposed textbooks in various public library branches throughout the state. Proposed law repeals present law.

Purchase of textbooks by public school governing authorities

Proposed law prohibits BESE from limiting the amount or percentage of state or local funds a public school governing authority may expend on the purchase of textbooks or other instructional materials needed to teach state content standards.

Present law encourages school boards to maximize the availability and accessibility of electronic versions of textbooks and other instructional materials and authorizes their purchase. Prohibits BESE from restricting the amount or percentage of state or local funds a board may expend on them. Proposed law retains present law.

Sale of school books no longer in use

Present law authorizes a school board, with prior BESE approval, to sell any textbook or library book no longer in use to any person or entity for private use at a fee established by the school board. Limits use of funds from such sale to textbook or library book purchases. Proposed law deletes requirement for prior BESE approval and the limitation on the specific use of sale funds.

Textbooks for home study students

Present law requires BESE to establish rules and procedures for supplying school books and other materials of instruction for children participating in approved home study programs when available. Proposed law specifies that such materials shall be supplied through the local public school governing authority.

Miscellaneous provisions

Present law:

- (1) Requires public school boards that disburse school library books, textbooks, and other instructional materials to nonpublic school students to submit documentation to the state superintendent of education to verify the administrative costs incurred and requires that such verified costs be paid by the state.
- (2) Provides relative to contracts with publishers for school books and for DOE's service as the state depository for school books.
- (3) Provides relative to the donation and disposal of school books no longer in use.
- (4) Requires BESE to prescribe and adopt and exercise supervision and control over school books and other learning materials for postsecondary and vocational-technical schools and programs.
- (5) Requires BESE to require publishers to furnish computer diskettes for producing braille versions of textbooks.

Proposed law repeals present law in (1) through (5) above.

(Amends R.S. 17:7(4) and 351; Repeals R.S. 17:8 - 8.2, 22(2)(e), 352, 353, 415.1, and 1985)