

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 20

BY SENATOR DUPLESSIS AND REPRESENTATIVES WILFORD CARTER, CHASSION, COX, FISHER, GREEN, JACKSON, LARVADAIN, LYONS, MENA, MILLER, NEWELL, SELDERS, TAYLOR, WALTERS AND YOUNG

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Education and Louisiana Workforce Commission, along with regional economic development organizations and local school boards and chambers of commerce, to aggressively develop and promote high quality, youth-serving apprenticeship programs and work-based experiences for high school students, develop recommendations for improvement, and provide for submission of a written report of findings and recommendations by January 16, 2025.

WHEREAS, an apprenticeship is a proven training program that is used as a talent development strategy for recruiting, training, and retaining world-class talent and has been used in the industry for decades; and

WHEREAS, apprenticeships are a work-based learning model where apprentices have supervised on-the-job training, along with job-related education, all while earning a wage that increases during the progression of the program; and

WHEREAS, apprenticeships provide a guided path to high-wage careers by combining work and training and allowing people to earn money while they upskill; and

WHEREAS, youth-serving apprenticeship models are work-based learning experiences that fit into a high school student's schedule and stack into apprenticeships, thereby increasing exposure to apprenticeships and the workforce talent pipeline; and

WHEREAS, in Louisiana, work-based learning opportunities such as internships, cooperative education, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships are defined in different places in law and policy and with different levels of specificity, resulting in lack of clarity on pathways and, thereby, young people are not accessing high-quality apprenticeships at the rate at which they could be; and

WHEREAS, other states have established youth-serving apprenticeship programs, which are programs with fewer hours or more structure and supports than full apprenticeships, tailored to high school students, in order to bridge the gap from high school

to career; and

WHEREAS, promoting career and workforce readiness should be recognized as having the same importance as preparing students for post-secondary education opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Education has adopted new measures to support young people's access to apprenticeships in recent years, including the Fast Forward program and a legislative allocation; and

WHEREAS, more information is needed to (1) understand the extent to which work-based learning opportunities and associated funding sources are currently being used by Louisiana school systems, (2) identify best practices for building pathways for young people to access apprenticeships, which can be learned from locally-created youth serving apprentice programs in Louisiana and from legislative programs in other states, (3) recommend definitions for a connected set of work-based learning opportunities so that young people can progress through these experiences towards an apprenticeship, (4) propose new experiences that fill gaps in the work-based learning experience continuum for high school students, and (5) identify process improvements, supports, and incentives that would enable school systems to guide students through high school pathways that lead to apprenticeships; and

WHEREAS, public schools should be afforded support in the effort to promote and provide career and workforce opportunities to students; and

WHEREAS, identifying programs and practices that have been successful will enable the state and public schools to provide better opportunities to students.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Education and Louisiana Workforce Commission, along with regional economic development organizations and local school boards and chambers of commerce, to aggressively develop and promote high quality, youth-serving apprenticeship programs and work-based experiences for high school students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and the Louisiana Workforce Commission should work closely with all stakeholders and interested parties to develop this program, including but not limited to representatives from YouthForce NOLA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations and the House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations no later than January 16, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the state superintendent of education and the secretary of the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES