

MEMBER: Barry Erwin **PROPOSAL#** Erwin # 06 **REFERRED TO AG on:** AGDNES
SUBJECT: BESE - Dropout Prevention Programs **DATE REPORTED BY AG:** November 19, 2009 **REPORT:** Favorable
COMMISSION ACTION: AMENDED / ADOPTED **DATE:** December 1, 2009 **RECOMMENDATION #:** 212

RECOMMENDATION: Require the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to terminate the pre-GED (Graduate Equivalency Diploma) Skills Options Program and direct local education agencies to re-direct funds supporting the program to approved dropout prevention programs modeled after Jobs for America's Graduates.

Summary Description/Nature of Change	Key/Implementation Responsibilities	Need	Action Needed	Benefit/Saving	Done/ Study
<p>Require the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to terminate the pre-GED (Graduate Equivalency Diploma) Skills Options Program and direct local education agencies to re-direct funds supporting the program to approved dropout prevention programs modeled after Jobs for America's Graduates.</p>	<p>Dept. of Education (DOE) and BESE.</p>	<p>Only 65.9% of students graduate on time from high school in Louisiana. DOE is working closely with local school districts, other state agencies, and business and industry groups to increase graduation rates, reduce dropout rates, and place students on a path to success after graduation.</p> <p>Two programs aimed at providing successful interventions to struggling students include JAG and the Educational Mission to Prepare Louisiana's Youth (EMPLoY). JAG is a nationally recognized and successful program based on a national model that assists students still enrolled in school (as well as students who have already dropped out) in obtaining their high school diploma or GED. EMPLoY was launched as a pilot in January 2009 in 14 districts. Based on the JAG model, EMPLoY participants, age 16 and older, have opted out of the traditional school setting and have enrolled in the state's GED/Options program. EMPLoY provides participants with job training through dual enrollment courses and/or industry-based certifications, intense training in basic skills to help them succeed in passing the GED, soft skills training and Work Keys assessment to earn a Work Ready Certificate. The projected graduation rate for participants in the program is 70%.</p>	<p>BESE to make appropriate changes in MFP formula and receive legislative approval.</p> <p>Recommendation should be phased-in.</p>	<p>Increase retention; increase literacy and numeracy. Improved workforce for employers and opportunities for graduates. Current funding is \$3.3 million using TANF dollars.</p>	<p>Implementation could begin next fiscal year.</p>