

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1483
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Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that many students, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, do not have dedicated access to the technology necessary to access and use digital instructional materials. S.B. 1483 seeks to address this issue by providing for the establishment of a technology lending grant program under which grants are awarded to public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to implement a technology lending program to provide students access to equipment necessary to access and use electronic instructional materials.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1483 amends the Education Code to authorize the commissioner of education to establish a grant program under which grants are awarded to public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to implement a technology lending program to provide students access to equipment necessary to access and use electronic instructional materials. The bill authorizes a district or a charter school to apply to the commissioner to participate in the grant program and requires the commissioner, in awarding grants for each school year, to consider the availability of existing equipment to students in the district or school, other funding available to the district or school, and the district's or school's technology plan. The bill authorizes the commissioner to determine the terms of a grant so awarded, including limits on the grant amount and approved uses of grant funds. The bill authorizes the commissioner to recover funds not used in accordance with the terms of a grant by withholding amounts from any state funds otherwise due to the district or charter school.

S.B. 1483 caps the amount of money the commissioner may use from the state instructional materials fund each state fiscal biennium to administer the grant program at \$25 million or a different amount determined by appropriation and requires the cost of administering the program to be paid from such funds. The bill authorizes a district or charter school to use a grant awarded or other local funds to purchase, maintain, and insure equipment for a technology lending program and establishes that such equipment purchased with an awarded grant is the district's or school's property.

S.B. 1483 adds a temporary provision set to expire September 1, 2019, requiring the

commissioner to review the grant program and submit a report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the presiding officers of the standing committees in the senate and house primarily responsible for public education not later than January 1, 2019.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2017.