

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R3964 JRD-D

S.B. 1617
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Technology & Business Growth
5/5/1999
Committee Report (Amended)

DIGEST

Currently, Texas spent, over the 1998-99 biennium, approximately \$600 million in state funds on educational technology and telecommunications infrastructure building in addition to \$50 million in federal funds. Though Texas has made a substantial investment over the past decade in educational technology, including a wide variety of projects, agencies, and funding sources, the precise goal and expected result of this investment remains unclear. This bill would establish the Telecommunications and Educational Technology Coordinating Council to coordinate the state's promotion and use of educational technology.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1617 establishes the Telecommunications and Educational Technology Coordinating Council to coordinate the state's promotion and use of educational technology.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 7A, Education Code, by adding Section 7.006, as follows:

Sec. 7.006. TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY COORDINATING COUNCIL. Establishes the Telecommunications and Educational Technology Coordinating Council (council) to coordinate the state's promotion and use of educational technology. Sets forth the agency representatives for the council. Requires the council to create a statewide master plan designed to promote coordination of efforts and minimize duplication of efforts in the state's deployment of educational technology and in educational technology grants made to school districts and other entities. Requires the council to monitor the implementation of the plan and attempt to coordinate state educational technology efforts so that funding and services provided by the state are not duplicative and that unmet needs are addressed. Requires the council to promote discussions regarding issues such as the long-term ramifications of proposed educational technology initiatives and the best methods of meeting the educational needs of students with educational technology. Requires the Director of Information Resources representative to serve as presiding officer of the council. Requires the council to meet at the call of the presiding officer or as provided by procedural rules of the council. Authorizes each agency represented on the council to provide staff support to the council. Requires the council to submit a report to the legislature on the implementation of the statewide plan with recommendations on statutory or other changes that require legislative action to improve the statewide plan by a certain date.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 61C, Education Code, by adding Section 61.0761, as follows:

Sec. 61.0761. TRAINING FOR USE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES. Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (board), the Texas Education Agency, the State Board for Educator Certification, and institutions of higher education, under the leadership of the board, to cooperate to ensure certain goals and standards.

SECTION 3. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

SECTION 1.

Amends Section 7.006, Chapter 7A, Education Code, to include the Higher Education Coordinating Council on the council. Requires the Director of Information Resources representative to serve as presiding officer of the council. Requires the council to submit a report to the legislature on the implementation of the statewide plan with recommendations on statutory or other changes that require legislative action to improve the statewide plan by a certain date. Deletes text requiring the council to select a presiding officer from among its members. Makes conforming changes.