

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R2854 CAS-F

S.B. 265
By: Ogden
Education
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As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, the Texas Education Code does not allow students to remain enrolled in school while preparing for and taking a high school equivalency examination (exam). S.B. 1, passed during the 76th Texas Legislature, inadvertently deleted a provision allowing students taking the exam to stay enrolled in school. As proposed, S.B. 265 reinstates prior statutory authorization for the Texas Education Agency to develop a program for school districts to prepare eligible students for the exam and requires participating school districts to offer preparatory classes to eligible students.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Education Agency in SECTION 1 (Section 29.087, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 29C, Education Code, by adding Section 29.087, as follows:

Sec. 29.087. SCHOOL DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY EXAMINATION PROGRAMS. Requires the Texas Education Agency (agency) to develop a program to prepare eligible students who are at risk of dropping out of school to take the high school equivalency examination (exam). Requires a district participating in the program to offer preparatory classes for the exam to each eligible student. Sets forth certain criteria for a student's eligibility. Requires a district to inform each student who has completed the program of the time and place at which the student may take the exam. Requires the agency to adopt rules to ensure that students are not encouraged to participate in the program only because of discipline problems or poor academic performance. Requires the agency to request permission from the General Educational Development Testing Service to administer the exam to those students who participated in the program. Requires the agency to include information on the number of students enrolled in the program and the number who performed satisfactorily on the exam in its comprehensive biennial report under Section 39.182.

SECTION 2. Reenacts and amends Section 7.111(a), Education Code, as amended by Chapters 76 and 1282, Acts of the 76th Legislature, Regular Session, 1999, to add a person who has completed a high school equivalency preparation program under Section 29.087 to the list of people eligible to take the high school equivalency examination.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 25.086(a), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.