

## BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center  
80R6011 PAM-D

S.B. 553  
By: Shapleigh  
Education  
3/8/2007  
As Filed

### AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Section 28.0051, Education Code, sets forth the requirements for dual language immersion programs, but there is no dual language education program created in statute. In 2002-2003, the first-grade enrollments for the three largest school districts in the state (Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth independent school districts) were each over 50 percent Hispanic. Approximately 40 percent of students in each of these classes were classified as limited-English-proficient. The data for these school districts represents a growing statewide trend that poses significant challenges to educators of children who must learn in a language other than that which is primarily spoken in their home. Dual language education programs provide instruction in both English and the native language of the non-English-speaking students. Such programs promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and grade-level academic achievement by placing both native English-speaking and non-English-speaking students together in the same classroom.

As proposed, S.B. 553 establishes a dual language education pilot program to study the effectiveness of dual language education.

### RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the State Board of Education in SECTION 2 (Section 21.0485, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 3 (Section 28.0052, Education Code) of this bill.

### SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Authorizes this Act to be cited as the "21st Century Texas Educational Competitiveness Act." Provides background information about dual language education programs and establishes a pilot program to study the effectiveness of dual language education.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 21, Education Code, by adding Section 21.0485, as follows:

Sec. 21.0485. DUAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION TEACHER CERTIFICATION. Requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to establish a dual language education teaching certificate to ensure that there are teachers with special training to work with students and other teachers in a dual language education program (program). Requires SBOE to propose rules establishing the training requirements, including the minimum academic qualifications, a person is mandated to accomplish to obtain a certificated under this section. Requires SBOE to propose rules establishing the requirements for a teacher who receives training in a foreign country to obtain a certificate under this section.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, by adding Section 28.0052, as follows:

Sec. 28.0052. DUAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION PILOT PROJECT. (a) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner) to establish a pilot project in school districts selected by the commissioner under which the Texas Education Agency (TEA) examines programs and the effect of those programs on a student's ability to graduate from high school.

(b) Requires the commissioner, in selecting school districts under Subsection (a), to select districts that meet certain requirements regarding program commitment and language proficiency of enrolled students, and give preference to a district that demonstrates the potential for expanding the program through middle school and will implement the program at the kindergarten level.

(c) Requires the commissioner by rule to require a district to limit activities of the program during the first year to planning activities, including hiring teachers, training teachers, ensuring teacher certification, establishing parental and community support for the program, and acquiring adequate learning materials and both program languages.

(d) Provides that a program that applies for the expansion of an existing program is eligible for funding under the pilot project.

(e) Authorizes funding provided for a program to be used by a district for classroom materials and tuition and textbook expenses for students seeking teacher certification under Section 21.0485.

(f) Requires TEA to report to the legislature describing TEA's activities under the pilot project, the effect of the project on grade-level completion and high school graduate rates, and the recommendations arising from the project. Requires TEA to submit an interim report under this subsection not later than January 1, 2011, and a final report not later than January 1, 2013.

(g) Provides that this section expires August 1, 2013.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.