

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1726
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Encouraging the sharing of best practices in dropout prevention among local school districts would accelerate the use and implementation of practices that have demonstrated success in addressing the dropout problem. Currently, some school districts and charter schools in Texas are implementing innovative dropout prevention programs at the same time that others are looking for solutions and are unaware of these programs. Statewide, there is not a systemic mechanism for identifying and documenting many of the innovative and promising practices being implemented at the local level, nor is there a means of developing research evidence regarding these local programs once they are identified. Moreover, the infrastructure to communicate successful or promising dropout prevention practices and to assist school districts across Texas with implementing them is limited.

To begin to provide information on successful practices, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) currently operates a Best Practices Clearinghouse. However, given the clearinghouse's operational limitations and the wide scope of its content, limited resources have been directed specifically at dropout prevention programs. Moreover, the clearinghouse currently lacks the capacity to actively seek out successful dropout prevention programs or disseminate information to districts interested in implementing them. Adding more capacity to the clearinghouse would help provide resources and information to address the dropout problem in Texas.

As proposed, S.B. 1726 creates a dropout prevention assistance center in conjunction with TEA's online best practices clearinghouse. The bill requires that the center conduct an environmental scan to identify successful or promising local dropout prevention and recovery programs, collect and analyze performance data regarding successful or promising local programs, identify strategies or components common to successful or promising programs, disseminate evidence about successful or promising programs through certain means of communication, work with regional education service centers to create needs assessments for districts that are interested in determining which best practices would be most appropriate for their local conditions, identify schools for learning tours and provide templates for regional service centers and other school districts to use when visiting successful and promising programs in action, and develop blueprints or guides for districts interested in implementing specific best practices, including research supporting the practice, implementation costs, and resources needed for effective implementation.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 7, Education Code, by adding Section 7.0091, as follows:

Sec. 7.0091. BEST PRACTICES FOR DROPOUT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY. Requires the Texas Education Agency, in conjunction with the online clearinghouse of best practices information established under Section 7.009 (Best Practices; Clearinghouse), to establish a dropout prevention assistance center to identify successful or promising school district, campus, or open-enrollment charter school dropout prevention and recovery programs; collect and analyze performance data regarding

programs described in this subsection; identify strategies or components common to programs described by this subsection; disseminate to school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and regional education service centers information concerning programs described by this subsection through conferences, publications, toolkits, and posting to the online clearinghouse established under Section 7.009; work in conjunction with regional education service centers to create needs assessments for districts and open-enrollment charter schools that are interested in determining which best practices for dropout prevention or recovery would be most appropriate for the district or charter school; identify programs described by this subsection that educators and other employees of a school district, open-enrollment charter school, and regional education service center could visit and establish procedures for such learning visits; and develop or collect and provide information for districts and open-enrollment charter schools interested in implementing a specific best practice for dropout prevention or recovery, including research concerning the efficacy of the practice and costs associated with and other resources needed for implementing the practice.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.