

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
83R16921 PAM-F

C.S.S.B. 1538
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Education
3/27/2013
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Schools that serve a large population of students who have previously dropped out and are recovering credits to graduate are not accurately measured in the Texas accountability system. Many of the students served by these schools are simply removed from the accountability system altogether and therefore, their ultimate accomplishment of staying in school and graduating is never counted as a success for the school. This puts these schools in danger of being labeled as unacceptable and potentially shut down merely because they serve the dropout population they intended to serve.

C.S.S.B. 1538 will allow the accountability system to more accurately measure schools that serve a dropout population, and will designate these schools as dropout recovery schools. This designation will allow these schools to continue to serve students who have, at first, not succeeded for one reason or another, and it gives them a chance to continue and graduate ready for postsecondary education and/or the workforce. In addition, this legislation adds more students into the accountability system in order to measure their achievement.

C.S.S.B. 1538 amends current law relating to evaluating the performance, including computing dropout and completion rates, of public schools designated as dropout recovery schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the commissioner of education is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 39.054, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 39, Education Code, by adding Section 39.0545, as follows:

Sec. 39.0545. EVALUATING DROPOUT RECOVERY SCHOOLS. (a) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner), for purposes of evaluating performance under Section 39.053(c) (relating to certain indicators of student achievement), to designate as a dropout recovery school a school district or an open-enrollment charter school or a campus of a district or of an open-enrollment charter school that serves students in grades nine through 12 and has an enrollment of which at least 50 percent of the students are 17 years of age or older as of September 1 of the school year as reported for the fall semester Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) submission, and that meets the eligibility requirements for and is registered under alternative education accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner.

(b) Requires the commissioner, notwithstanding Section 39.053(c)(2) (relating to certain indicators of student achievement including, certain dropout rates), to use the alternative computation completion rate under this subsection to determine the student achievement indicator under Section 39.053(c)(2) for a dropout recovery school. Requires that the alternative completion rate be the ratio of the total number of students who graduate, continue attending school into the next academic year, or receive a high school equivalency certificate to the total number of students in the longitudinal cohort of students.

(c) Requires the commissioner, notwithstanding Section 39.053(c)(2), in determining the performance rating under Section 39.054 (Methods and Standards for Evaluating Performance) of a dropout recovery school, to include any student described by Section 39.053(g-1) (relating to requiring the commissioner to exclude certain information when calculating dropout and completion rates) who graduates or receives a high school equivalency certificate.

(d) Authorizes only the best result from the primary administration and any retake of an assessment instrument administered to a student in the school year evaluated under the accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner for a dropout recovery school to be considered in determining the performance rating of the school under Section 39.054.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.