

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
83R3642 CAS-D

S.B. 172  
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Education  
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As Filed

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

Currently, when children enter kindergarten, many do not have the skills necessary to be successful in school. Kindergarten teachers carry the burden of teaching a classroom of children with significantly varying skills, but may not have the tools necessary to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in learning in order to remediate and intervene appropriately.

The state currently requires school districts to assess literacy for students in kindergarten through second grade. If the district chooses an assessment tool approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the state will pay the cost up to \$5 per test for each student. While the literacy test is an important indicator of kindergarten readiness, research has shown that numeracy, language and communication, and social and emotional development are also significant indicators of readiness. A multidimensional assessment tool that evaluates literacy as well as other indicators could be an advantageous tool for educators to better identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in learning; strengthen educational programs; and focus curriculum to better meet students' needs.

S.B. 172 requires the commissioner of education to approve multidimensional assessment tools as a measure of kindergarten readiness, so long as literacy is a component of that assessment. Approved multidimensional tools would be optional to school districts and available on TEA's approved and funded assessment list.

As proposed, S.B. 172 amends current law relating to diagnosing the reading development and comprehension of public school kindergarten students.

### **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 Section 28.006(b), Education Code, as follows:

(b) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner) to include on the commissioner's list of reading instruments that a school district may use to diagnose the reading development and comprehension of kindergarten students, at least two multidimensional assessment tools. Requires that a multidimensional assessment tool on the commissioner's list either include a reading instrument and test at least three developmental skills, including literacy, or test at least two developmental skills, other than literacy, and be administered in conjunction with a separate reading instrument that is on a list adopted under this subsection. Provides that a multidimensional assessment tool administered as provided by this subsection is considered to be a reading instrument for purposes of this section.

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

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