

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2614
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Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Ten years ago, the legislature passed the College Preparation Assessments law to support the state's college-readiness agenda by requiring school districts to assess all 8th and 10th grade students with a valid, reliable, and nationally norm-referenced college readiness assessment subject to state funding. The program was funded in 2009-2010 and the number of students taking college readiness assessments expanded significantly.

Counselors use the diagnostic information provided by these assessments to help 8th grade students make informed decisions related to their H.B. 5 endorsement selections as well as identify 10th graders for advanced coursework. Today's college-readiness assessments have also evolved to connect students to many more opportunities to support their college and career ambitions including:

- In addition to the National Merit Scholarship Program, students now have access to an expanded the pool of available scholarships
- Free student access to the Khan Academy's personalized SAT study practice plans
- New interactive college and career exploration resources that help students identify potential majors and select relevant courses in high school and college as well as new scholarship qualifications.

H.B. 2614 Purpose: Current law requires school districts to administer these assessments to 8th and 10th graders if the state funds the assessments. H.B. 2614 simply makes the law permissive so that school districts have the option to offer these assessments if the program's funding is restored.

H.B. 2614 aligns with the H.B. 5 changes enacted in 2013 to address parents' over-testing concerns by making the program subject to local determination if funding for college readiness assessments is appropriated by this or a future legislature. Since this law is contingent on state funding, there is no fiscal note. H.B. 2614 also supports the recommendations of the Next Generation Assessment & Accountability Commission to support broader administration of college-readiness tests.

H.B. 2614 amends current law relating to school district discretion to administer college preparation assessment instruments to public school students at state cost.

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 39.0261(a), Education Code, as follows:

- (a) Provides that in addition to the assessment instruments authorized or required by this subchapter (Assessment of Academic Skills):

(1) each school year and at state cost, a school district is authorized, rather than required, to administer to students in the spring of the eighth grade an established, valid, reliable, and nationally norm-referenced preliminary college preparation assessment instrument for the purpose of diagnosing the academic strengths and deficiencies of students before entrance into high school;

(2) each school year and at state cost, a school district is authorized, rather than required, to administer to students in the 10th grade an established, valid, reliable, and nationally norm-referenced preliminary college preparation assessment instrument for the purpose of measuring a student's progress toward readiness for college and the workplace; and

(3) makes no changes to this subdivision.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.