

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3546
By: Meyer
Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that the state standard for a public school student to obtain credit by examination for courses or for grade levels was, until recently, appropriately set. With the standards now reduced, the parties note that some school districts are experiencing an increased demand for such testing. Additionally, some students who are meeting the reduced requirement are struggling in the subsequent course. C.S.H.B. 3546 seeks to remedy this situation by allowing school districts to control the passing standards for their students.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3546 amends the Education Code to authorize a school district's board of trustees to establish a minimum required score for each section of an examination for primary school grade level acceleration or an examination for high school academic subject credit approved by the board that is higher than certain existing minimum required scores for such examinations. The bill prohibits a minimum required score established by a district board of trustees from being greater than a score in the 90th percentile and requires such a minimum score to be established before the beginning of a school year for examinations to be administered in the school year and to apply for at least the entire school year. The bill's provisions apply beginning with the 2015–2016 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3546 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Section 28.023, Education Code, is amended by adding Subsection (h) to read as follows:

(h) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a school district board of trustees may establish a higher minimum passing standard, that is greater than the 80th percentile equal to or less than the 90th percentile, on an examination authorized by this section.

No equivalent provision.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Section 28.023, Education Code, is amended by adding Subsection (h) to read as follows:

(h) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a school district's board of trustees may establish a minimum required score for each section of an examination for acceleration or an examination for credit approved by the board under Subsection (a) that is higher than the minimum required scores under Subsections (b) and (c), respectively. A minimum required score established by a board of trustees under this subsection:

(1) may be no greater than a score in the 90th percentile;

(2) must be established before the beginning of a school year for examinations to be administered in the school year; and

(3) must apply for at least the entire school year.

SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.