

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1451
By: Taylor
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Teachers are charged with maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment in their classrooms. Concerns have been raised that, although current law authorizes a teacher to remove a student from the classroom for certain disruptive behavior that interferes with the teacher's ability to teach or the ability of the student's classmates to learn, some teachers may experience pressure to limit removals or be marked down on their annual appraisals for exercising that authority. S.B. 1451 seeks to improve employment-related protections for teachers by prohibiting a district from unfavorably evaluating or disciplining a teacher solely on the basis of student conduct documentation or disciplinary referrals.

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

S.B. 1451 amends the Education Code to authorize a teacher to document any conduct by a student that does not conform to the student code of conduct and to submit that documentation to the principal. The bill prohibits a school district from disciplining a teacher on the basis of such documentation. The bill requires the commissioner of education, in adopting criteria on which to appraise the performance of teachers, to ensure that a teacher may not be assigned an area of deficiency in an appraisal solely on the basis of disciplinary referrals made by the teacher or documentation regarding student conduct submitted by the teacher. The bill prohibits a public school district from assigning an area of deficiency to a teacher solely on such a basis. These provisions expressly do not prohibit a teacher from being assigned an area of deficiency based on documented evidence of a deficiency in classroom management obtained through observation or a substantiated report. The bill applies beginning with the 2019-2020 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.