

- SUBJECT:** Accountability ratings for schools that host programs for pregnant students
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 8 ayes — Grusendorf, Branch, Dawson, Dutton, Eissler, Griggs, Hochberg, Madden
0 nays
1 absent — Oliveira
- WITNESSES:** For — Lonel Nava, Ysleta Independent School District and Parents of the R.H.S. Community
Against — None
On — David Anderson, Texas Education Agency
- BACKGROUND:** Under Education Code, sec. 39.072, the State Board of Education must adopt rules to evaluate the performance of school districts and to assign each district a performance rating of exemplary, recognized, academically acceptable, or academically unacceptable. Among the factors taken into account are student performance on assessment tests, dropout and completion rates, and student attendance rates.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2449 would amend Education Code, sec. 39.072 to specify that students who regularly were assigned to one school campus but attended a program for pregnant students or parents at another program would be counted at their original campus for accountability purposes. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) could adopt rules to implement this provision and could implement the provision by an appeal of the campus rating.
- The bill would apply for the purposes of school accountability beginning with the 2003-04 school year. A district could apply to TEA for a determination of what a campus rating would have been in the 2002-03 school year if CSHB 2449 had been in effect.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2003.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 2449 would ensure that schools were not punished in TEA accountability ratings for sponsoring programs to help students who were more likely to have attendance or academic problems. By their nature, programs for pregnant students and new parents have higher rates of absenteeism, which can bring down the overall accountability rating of the host school. This is unfair, and could discourage schools from sponsoring these important programs.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

CSHB 2449 is unnecessary because this issue can and should be resolved by school districts. Each school district makes its own decision about how to report this data, but once a district has made the decision about how to count students, the data cannot be changed after test scores have been reported. The bill would set a bad precedent by providing support in statute for a district to request that a district's 2002-03 rating be changed. According to TEA rules, these ratings are final and are not subject to change.

NOTES:

The committee substitute added provisions allowing a district to apply for a new accountability rating for 2003-03. The original version of the bill would have amended Education Code, sec. 39.051(b) to specify that students who attended multi-campus dropout prevention programs should be considered students of the school they normally would have attended.