

- SUBJECT:** Requiring TEA to adopt federal standards for computing dropout rates
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Grusendorf, Branch, Dawson, Dutton, Eissler, Griggs, Hochberg  
0 nays  
2 absent — Oliveira, Madden
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, March 18 — voice vote
- WITNESSES:** For — Lindsay Gustafson, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Julian Shaddix, Texas Association of School Principals  
Against — None
- BACKGROUND:** Under Education Code, sec. 39.051, the State Board of Education must adopt a set of indicators of the quality of learning on school campuses and must review these indicators biennially to consider appropriate revisions. The indicators must include dropout and completion rates, student attendance data, and student performance on various assessment instruments (exams). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) uses these indicators to define exemplary, recognized, and unacceptable performance for school districts.
- DIGEST:** SB 186 would require TEA, in developing performance indicators, to compute dropout rates for grade levels 9 through 12 in accordance with standards and definitions adopted by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education and high school graduation rates in accordance with standards and definitions adopted in compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The bill would eliminate the requirement that performance indicators include the percentage of students taking end-of-course assessment tests.
- The bill would take effect September 1, 2003. TEA would have to modify its data collection system no later than the 2005-06 school year. In the interim, TEA would have to help school districts compute the required high school

graduation rates to the extent necessary to apply for dropout-reduction grants funded by the No Child Left Behind Act.

**NOTES:**

Implementation of SB 186 would require modifying TEA's Public Education Information Management System. According to the bill's fiscal note, TEA estimates that hiring contractors to make these modifications would cost \$350,000, but TEA could incorporate those costs into its current administrative operating budget.

The companion bill, HB 381 by Dutton, et al., passed the House on the Local, Consent, and Resolutions Calendar on March 28 and was referred to the Senate Education Committee.