

- SUBJECT:** Grants for education and workforce readiness programs in public schools
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 7 ayes — Eissler, Zedler, Branch, Hochberg, Mowery, Olivo, Patrick
0 nays
2 absent — Delisi, Dutton
- WITNESSES:** For —Joseph Burke, Junior Achievement of South Texas; Jacqueline Lain, Texas Association of School Boards; David M. Swincher, Junior Achievement of Central Texas; (*Registered, but did not testify:* David Anthony, Texas School Alliance; Amy Beneski, Texas Association of School Administrators; Robby Collins, Dallas I.S.D.; David Duty, Texas Association of School Boards; Rebecca Flores, Houston I.S.D.; Jan Friese, Texas Counseling Association; Diane Jackson, Spring Branch I.S.D.; Mike Meroney)

Against —None
- BACKGROUND:** The dropout rate for Texas students may be as high as 33 percent. School districts throughout the state have partnered with organizations that provide volunteers who assist and support districts in educating students about key issues such as the importance of staying in school, personal finance, and workforce readiness skills. Some of these programs have demonstrated that an increased understanding in business and workforce knowledge may enhance the desire among students to stay in school.
- DIGEST:** HB 2217 would add Education Code, sec. 29.917 to authorize the commissioner of education to use appropriated funds to award grants to organizations that provide volunteers to teach classroom or after-school programs. The programs would be limited to college readiness, workforce readiness, dropout prevention, or personal financial literacy. The commissioner also could accept gifts, grants, and donations to administer this program. The commissioner could conduct a study of the programs to determine their success in preparing students for higher education and workforce readiness.

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, 2007.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, HB 2217 would cost the state \$5.1 million in general revenue in fiscal 2008-09. The program would serve an estimated 80,000 students at 24 sites statewide. Each of the 24 sites would be funded with a \$100,000 grant. The program would require 1 additional FTE to administer and evaluate the grant program.

HB 2217 was withdrawn from the May 2 Local, Consent, and Resolutions Calendar and transferred to the Calendars Committee.