

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
76R6268 CAS-D

S.B. 516
By: Ogden
Education
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As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, Texas law requires a student to withdraw from school in order to be eligible for the high school equivalency examination. This prohibits the ability to keep at-risk students in programs that help prepare them for the examination. This bill would develop a program that would be required by each school district for students who wish to take the high school equivalency examination to prepare eligible students for the examination.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 516 establishes school district high school equivalency examination programs.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is granted to the Texas Higher Education Agency in SECTION 1 (Section 29.086(e), Education Code) in this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 29C, Education Code, by adding Section 29.086, as follows:

Sec. 29.086. SCHOOL DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY EXAMINATION PROGRAMS. Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop a program for school districts to prepare eligible students who are at risk of dropping out of school to take a high school equivalency examination (examination). Requires a district that participates in the program to offer preparatory classes for the examination to each eligible student. Sets forth requirements for a student's eligibility for participation in the program. Requires a district to inform each student who has completed the program of the time and place at which the student is authorized to take the examination. Requires TEA to adopt rules to ensure that students are not encouraged to participate in the program solely as a means to divert students with discipline or academic problems into the program as an alternative to regular high school graduation. Requires TEA to request permission from the General Educational Development Testing Service to administer the service's examination to students enrolled in high school who participate in the program.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 7.111(a), Education Code, to make conforming changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 25.086(a), Education Code, to make conforming changes.

SECTION 4. Emergency clause.

Effective date: upon passage.