

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1718
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S/SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Under current law, the results of a single test taken in the eleventh grade determine whether a student graduates from high school. Tests are a good indicator of knowledge obtained through the coursework and the level of education being administered in that particular school. However, they cease to be so when used in isolation of other academic measures or when high-stakes consequences like graduation are attached to them. Other criteria, such as teacher evaluations, a student's grades, and overall academic achievement are necessary in accurately measuring a student's performance.

As proposed, S.B. 1718 follows national standards that require test scores to be used as one of several criteria when making high stakes decisions regarding students.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 2 (Section 28.0252, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 28.025(c) and (d), Education Code, as follows:

(c) Authorizes a student to graduate and receive a diploma in other cases only if the student successfully completes the curriculum requirements identified by the State Board of Education under Subsection (a) and meets the alternative graduation criteria prescribed under Section 28.0252.

(d) Makes a conforming change.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 28, Education Code, by adding Section 28.0252, as follows:

Sec. 28.0252. ALTERNATIVE GRADUATION CRITERIA. (a) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner), by rule, to prescribe alternative graduation criteria that a student may meet to graduate and receive a diploma without complying with Section 39.025(a) (Exit-Level Performance Required). Requires the alternative graduation criteria to compensate for unsatisfactory performance on the individual assessment instruments specified in Section 39.025(a). Requires the alternative graduation criteria to include certain student information.

(b) Requires a committee composed of the student's high school principal or the principal's designee and two certified teachers in the student's school district who teach at the high school level to determine whether a student who has complied with Section 39.025(a) has met the alternative graduation criteria prescribed under Subsection (a). Requires the commissioner to adopt rules relating to the selection and operation of a committee under this subsection.

(c) Requires a committee established under Subsection (b) to determine whether a student who has not complied with Section 39.025(a) has met the alternative graduation criteria prescribed under Subsection (a) under certain circumstances.

SECTION 3. (a) Makes application of this Act prospective to the 2006-2007 school year.

(b) Requires the commissioner, not later than June 1, 2006, to adopt rules as required by Sections 28.0252(a) and (b), Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 4. Effective date: September 1, 2005.