

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 2503
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Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas students are currently required by federal law to be technology literate by the end of the 8th grade. The state defines a “technology literate student” as a student who meets the requirements of the state’s Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) assessment instruments. In addition, the Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) long-range plan for technology includes a priority for technology applications accountability.

The state has high technology application content standards and a wide assortment of technology application materials. However, it does not have a statewide process for gathering quantitative technology literacy data, nor does it have an accountability measure that school districts can use to report their students’ mastery of TEKS assessment instruments to TEA. The absence of a data-gathering tool and an accountability measure for school districts has resulted in the state’s inability to obtain data to report to the United States Department of Education.

H.B. 2503 provides for a statewide pilot program of an online technology assessment for a certain sample of Texas students in order to provide Texas with a benchmark of its students’ technology proficiency.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 39.0235, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 39, Education Code, by adding Section 39.0235, as follows:

Sec. 39.0235. TECHNOLOGY LITERACY ASSESSMENT PILOT PROGRAM. (a) Defines “pilot program.”

(b) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner) by rule to establish a pilot program in which a participating school district assesses student technology proficiency.

(c) Authorizes a school district (district) to apply to the commissioner to participate in the pilot program. Requires the commissioner to select for participation districts from both rural and urban areas of the state.

(d) Requires the Texas Education Agency to adopt an assessment instrument designed to assess an individual student's mastery of the essential knowledge and skills in technology to be administered by a district participating in the pilot program. Requires the assessment instrument adopted under this subsection to be an existing product that is currently available.

(e) Requires the assessment instrument adopted under Subsection (d) to be administered, each school year, in a participating school district to each student in either fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, or ninth grade, with the grade level and time to be determined by the district.

(f) Sets forth specific requirements of the assessment instrument adopted under Subsection (d).

(g) Requires an assessment instrument administered by a participating district to be designed in a manner to provide the district with an automatic report of the technology literacy proficiency of a district student in a format that is compatible with the district and state data information systems.

(h) Requires a participating district to report student performance on the assessment instrument to the agency.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective to the 2007-2008 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.