

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 709
By: Rose, Guillen (Watson)
Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that every classroom be taught by a highly qualified teacher. One measure of this is the number of teachers who have obtained national certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which sets rigorous standards for teacher knowledge and skills. Nationwide, 74,000 teachers have achieved this status. Currently, only 472 of these teachers work in Texas. One reason for this is due to the fact that Texas offers no financial incentives for teachers to seek this rigorous and expensive credential. In 36 other states, teachers are rewarded for obtaining this certification with salary stipends, thus encouraging hundreds more teachers to seek this credential.

H.B. 709 amends current law relating to the award of stipends to nationally certified classroom teachers under the educator excellence awards program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 21.705, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 21.705. AWARD PAYMENTS. Requires school district to use at least 60 percent of grant funds awarded to the district under this subchapter to directly award classroom teachers who effectively improve student achievement as determined by meaningful, objective measures. Requires that the remaining funds be used only for certain stipends, including providing stipends to classroom teachers who hold advanced certification from an organization that certifies at least 2,500 teachers in the United States each year based on the teachers' satisfaction, through study, expert evaluation, self-assessment, and peer review, of high and rigorous standards for accomplished teaching. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2009-2010 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.