

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 13
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The 83rd Legislature, Regular Session, 2013, passed H.B. 5, a bipartisan measure that both reduced testing and increased the focus on workforce development and college readiness in our public schools. Through this legislation, high school graduates now receive endorsements on their diploma noting their aptitude and experience in particular fields.

Many educators and parents contend that, in order to make this legislation more effective, the legislature needs to ensure that students are given instruction at a younger age regarding their options in graduation plans, higher education, and career opportunities.

Furthermore, others have argued that red tape and restrictions on dual enrollment have hindered many students from achieving their full potential prior to graduation.

S.B. 13 addresses these issues by implementing a high school, college, and career exploration class for middle school students and removing many restrictions on dual enrollment.

As proposed, S.B. 13 amends current law relating to measures to support public school student academic achievement and career preparation, including measures to improve and support dual-credit courses.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the commissioner of education is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 28.009, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 28.009, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 28.009(b), Education Code, by prohibiting a rule adopted by the commissioner of education from limiting the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a student may enroll while in high school or limiting the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a student may enroll each semester or academic year.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, by adding Section 28.016, as follows:

Sec. 28.016. INSTRUCTION IN HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE, AND CAREER PREPARATION. (a) Requires each school district to provide instruction to students in grades seven and eight in preparing for high school, college, and a career.

(b) Requires that the instruction include information regarding:

(1) the creation of a high school personal graduation plan under Section 28.02121 (High School Personal Graduation Plan);

- (2) the distinguished level of achievement described by Section 28.025(b-15) (relating to a student earning a distinguished level of achievement);
- (3) each endorsement described by Section 28.025(c-1) (relating to a student earning an endorsement by curriculum requirements);
- (4) college readiness standards; and
- (5) potential career choices and the education needed to enter those careers.

(c) Authorizes a school district to provide the instruction as a part of any existing course or may establish a new course through which to provide the instruction.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 130.008, Education Code, by adding Subsections (g) and (h), as follows:

(g) Requires a course offered for joint high school and junior college credit under this section to be taught by a qualified instructor approved or selected by the public junior college. Provides that, for purposes of this subsection, an instructor is qualified if the instructor holds a doctoral or master's degree in the discipline that is the subject of the course, or a master's degree in another discipline with a concentration that required completion of a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the discipline that is the subject of the course.

(h) Requires a public junior college, not later than the 60th day after receipt, to approve or reject an application for approval to teach a course at a high school that is submitted by an instructor employed by the school district, organization, or other person that operates the high school with which the junior college entered into an agreement under this section to offer the course.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 303.003(b-2), Labor Code, to authorize funds to be awarded under this subsection to a lower-division institution of higher education to be used under an agreement with a school district, or to a school district to be used under an agreement with a lower-division institution of higher education, to support courses offered for joint high school and college-level credit or offered under a college credit career or technical education program that leads to an industry-recognized license, credential, or certificate. Makes no further change to this subsection.

SECTION 5. Provides that Section 28.016, Education Code, as added by this Act, applies beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.