

By: Isett

H.B. No. 7

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the accreditation of private elementary and secondary schools.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 7, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 7.113 to read as follows:

Sec. 7.113. PRIVATE SCHOOL ACCREDITATION. (a) A private elementary or secondary school is considered to be accredited for all purposes under this code if the school:

(1) is accredited by an organization that is recognized by the commissioner to accredit nonpublic schools; or

(2) is accredited by the board under Subsection (d).

(b) A private school may apply for accreditation to the board by submitting to the board:

(1) a report certified by the school's governing body that lists all of the students who have graduated from the school during the preceding four years; and

(2) the results of the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT) of all graduating seniors at the school who took the SAT or ACT during the preceding four years.

(c) The board shall make a determination on an application under Subsection (b) and notify the private school governing body of that determination not later than the 60th day after the date the

1 board receives the application.

2 (d) The board shall accredit the private school if the board  
3 determines that, for at least three of the preceding four years:

4 (1) the percentage of graduating seniors at the school  
5 who took the SAT or ACT exceeds the state average percentage of  
6 graduating seniors who took the SAT or ACT; and

7 (2) the average SAT or ACT scores for graduating  
8 seniors at the school exceeded the state average of SAT or ACT  
9 scores for graduating seniors in the state.

10 (e) The accreditation of a private school that is accredited  
11 under Subsection (d) expires on the third anniversary of the date  
12 the accreditation is granted. Except as provided by Subsection  
13 (h), Subsections (b)-(d) apply each time the school applies for  
14 accreditation.

15 (f) For the sole purpose of confirming the information  
16 submitted by a private school that is accredited under Subsection  
17 (d), the board may audit the school one time during each three-year  
18 period that the school is accredited.

19 (g) If, during the audit, the board determines that there is  
20 any discrepancy in the data the school submits to the board under  
21 Subsection (b), the board shall notify the school of the  
22 discrepancy in writing and of the school's right to respond in  
23 writing to the determination not later than the 60th day after the  
24 date the school receives the notification. As soon as practicable  
25 after the end of the 60-day period, the board shall make a  
26 preliminary determination concerning whether the school satisfies  
27 the requirements for accreditation under Subsection (d). The board

1 shall notify the school of the preliminary determination and if the  
2 board has determined that the school does not satisfy one or more of  
3 the requirements, the board shall notify the school of the date,  
4 time, and location of a board meeting at which the board will  
5 consider whether to revoke the school's accreditation and of the  
6 right of a school representative to be heard at the meeting. If the  
7 board determines at the meeting that the school does not satisfy one  
8 or more of the requirements, the board shall immediately revoke the  
9 school's accreditation. The board may revoke the school's  
10 accreditation regardless of whether a school representative  
11 attends the meeting.

12 (h) A school whose accreditation is revoked under  
13 Subsection (g) may not reapply for accreditation under Subsection  
14 (b) until the third anniversary of the date that the board revokes  
15 the school's accreditation.

16 (i) The board shall adopt rules as necessary to carry out  
17 this section.

18 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
19 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
20 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
21 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
22 Act takes effect September 1, 2005.