

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 493
By: Van de Putte
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Documentation is a necessary component to the effective oversight and continued improvement of our schools. However, excessive reports and paperwork should not be required at the expense of time spent on students' education. When a teacher is required to spend long hours filling out forms rather than preparing for class, it is at the cost of teaching students. While there are currently provisions at the local level to limit teacher paperwork, there is no state law relating to the amount of paperwork required of school districts by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). S.B. 493 requires the commissioner of education to review and reduce written reports and paperwork required of a school district. This bill also directs the commissioner to adopt a policy to limit the number of reports and other paperwork that a principal or classroom teacher may be required by TEA to complete.

Current law directs local districts to limit paperwork for teachers, but there is no enforcement mechanism and no penalty for not reducing paperwork. This bill amends Section 39.075 of the Education Code to include repeated complaints against excessive paperwork as an impetus for a special accreditation investigation authorized by the commissioner.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

SB 493 states that at least once each even-numbered year the commissioner of education is required to review and, to the extent possible, reduce written reports and other paperwork required of a school district by the agency. The commissioner is to adopt a policy that limits written reports and other paperwork that a principal or classroom teacher may be required by the agency to complete.

Additionally, the Education Code is amended in that the commissioner may authorize special accreditation investigations to be conducted in response to repeated complaints submitted to the TEA concerning imposition of excessive paperwork requirements on classroom teachers.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Subsection (b-1), Section 39.075, Education Code as added by this Act, applies beginning with the 2005 - 2006 school year.

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