

By: Van de Putte

S.B. No. 1718

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the requirements for a high school diploma.

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

SECTION 1. Sections 28.025(c) and (d), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(c) A person may receive a diploma if the person is eligible for a diploma under Section 28.0251. In other cases, a student may graduate and receive a diploma only if:

(1) the student successfully completes the curriculum requirements identified by the State Board of Education under Subsection (a) and:

(A) complies with Section 39.025(a); or

(B) meets the alternative graduation criteria prescribed under Section 28.0252; or

(2) the student successfully completes an individualized education program developed under Section 29.005.

(d) A school district may issue a certificate of coursework completion to a student who successfully completes the curriculum requirements identified by the State Board of Education under Subsection (a) but who fails to comply with Section 39.025(a) or the alternative graduation criteria under Section 28.0252. A school district may allow a student who receives a certificate to participate in a graduation ceremony with students receiving high school diplomas.

SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 28, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 28.0252 to read as follows:

Sec. 28.0252. ALTERNATIVE GRADUATION CRITERIA. (a) The commissioner by rule shall prescribe alternative graduation criteria that a student may meet to graduate and receive a diploma without complying with Section 39.025(a). The alternative graduation criteria must compensate for unsatisfactory performance on the individual assessment instruments specified in Section 39.025(a). The alternative graduation criteria must include a student's:

(1) grade point average beginning in grade 9;

(2) current class ranking;

(3) performance on the individual assessment instruments specified in Section 39.025(a), including a consideration of whether extenuating circumstances may have adversely affected the student's performance; and

(4) overall academic performance beginning in grade 9, as evaluated by two or more of the student's teachers.

(b) A committee composed of the student's high school principal or the principal's designee and two certified teachers in the student's school district who teach at the high school level shall determine whether a student who has not complied with Section 39.025(a) has met the alternative graduation criteria prescribed under Subsection (a). The commissioner shall adopt rules relating to the selection and operation of a committee under this subsection.

(c) A committee established under Subsection (b) shall

1 determine whether a student who has not complied with Section
2 39.025(a) has met the alternative graduation criteria prescribed
3 under Subsection (a):

4 (1) following the first administration to the student
5 of the assessment instruments specified in Section 39.025(a);

6 (2) on written request of the student's parent or
7 guardian, not more than one time in each school year following the
8 school year in which the assessment instruments specified in
9 Section 39.025(a) are first administered to the student; and

10 (3) when the principal of the student's high school, or
11 the principal's designee, determines that the student is within one
12 month of completing each requirement for a high school diploma
13 other than compliance with Section 39.025(a).

14 SECTION 3. (a) Section 28.025, Education Code, as amended
15 by this Act, and Section 28.0252, Education Code, as added by this
16 Act, apply beginning with the 2006-2007 school year.

17 (b) Not later than June 1, 2006, the commissioner of
18 education shall adopt rules as required by Sections 28.0252(a) and
19 (b), Education Code, as added by this Act.

20 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.