

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 396
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Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Dual credit classes offer high school students a great opportunity to take college classes and get both high school and college credit. This not only lets students take advanced classes that might not be available at their high school, it also lets them explore the idea of going to college and saves them money once they get there. However some districts currently only give additional weight in GPA calculations for advance placement courses or international baccalaureate courses -- not dual credit courses. This creates a disincentive for students to take dual credit classes as their work would not be reflected in their GPA as it would be for AP classes. Taking a dual credit class instead of an AP class would hurt a student's class rank and eligibility for top 10% automatic college admission. CSHB 396 would require school districts to adopt a GPA formula that gives the weight to a dual credit course that it does a comparable AP, IB, or honors course. It also requires this formula be used for determining class rank and eligibility for top 10% automatic college admission. This would help make high school GPA calculations more fair for our high school students.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Commissioner of Education in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

The bill amends the Section 28.0252 of the Education Code to provide that a school district shall adopt a method of computing a student's high school grade point average that provides for the weight given to each dual credit course completed by a student to be equal to the weight given to each comparable honors course, advance placement course, or international baccalaureate course. The bill further provides that the school district shall use such method to compute a student's high school grade point average, which shall be used in determining the student's class rank and eligibility for automatic college admission under Section 51.803, Education Code. The bill directs each school district to adopt such method of computing grade point average as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act.

The bill repeals Section 28.0252(b-1) of the Education Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2007.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The original bill requires the Commissioner of Education to develop a standard method for high school GPA calculation. The substitute directs each school district to adopt a method of computing grade point average that gives dual credit classes a weight equal to the weight given to each comparable honors course, advance placement course, or international baccalaureate course.

The substitute adds a requirement that such method be used in determining a student's class rank.

The substitute adds a requirement that the Commissioner of Education adopt rules necessary for implementation.

The substitute adds a repealer provision not included in the original bill.