

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2217
By: Eissler
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Legislature has focused on college and workforce readiness as key education issues, along with dropout prevention and personal financial literacy. In school districts throughout Texas, organizations with thousands of volunteers have been helping school districts address these issues, in both classroom and after-school programs. By partnering with school districts at no cost to them, the organizations and volunteers are able to provide practical, hands-on applications that emphasize the importance of staying in school and learning about subjects such as math, science, and economics. In addition to delivering the curriculum, the volunteers, most of whom work in local businesses, serve as role models and mentors for students. With the state's increased focus on issues such as college and workforce readiness, dropout prevention, and financial literacy, school districts have expressed interest in expanding these programs, but the organizations have not had the capacity, in terms of recruiting and training more volunteers, to meet the demand.

This bill would authorize the Commissioner of Education, from funds appropriated for the purpose, to award grants to organizations that provide volunteers to teach classroom or after-school programs.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

This bill authorizes the Commissioner of Education, from funds appropriated for the purpose, to award grants to organizations that provide volunteers to teach classroom or after-school programs to enhance college readiness, workforce readiness, dropout prevention, or personal financial literacy. To implement or administer such programs, the Commissioner may accept gifts, grants, and donations from public or private entities. The Commissioner is also authorized to conduct a study of such programs to determine their success in preparing students for higher education and participation in the workforce.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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