

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2399
By: Delisi
Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

High turnover rates for classroom teachers and related education professionals contribute to an ongoing statewide shortage of teachers and high costs in training replacements. This bill addresses the issue of teacher retention through research-based demonstration projects targeting turnover rates undertaken in various school districts. These demonstration projects will test multiple strategies and will be evaluated for their effectiveness in retaining quality educators in the classroom.

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

Note: Unless otherwise specified, statutory references in this Bill Analysis are to the Education Code.

Current law provides that an eligible campus must use 25 percent of a grant award received under Section 21.655 for various specified uses and programs, including a program that has been proven to recruit and retain highly effective teachers. This bill expands upon the above provision relating to a program proven to recruit and retain highly effective teachers by specifying that such a program may include teacher retention and demonstration projects that employ innovative, research-based practices to identify and retain highly effective teachers, such as a teacher recruitment and selection strategy, an alternative certification program, a campus governance model, a differentiated compensation plan, all of which are described in more detail in the bill, as well as other research-based strategies designed to improve teacher retention rates.

The bill provides that the Act applies beginning with the 2007-2008 school year.

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 provided that from funds appropriated to the Texas Education Agency (agency) the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) may provide grants to school districts to design and implement teacher retention demonstration projects that employ innovative, research-based practices to identify and retain highly effective teachers. Funds may be used to implement teacher recruitment and selection strategies, implement alternative certification programs, implement induction and mentoring programs, implement campus governance models, implement differentiated compensation plans, and, to the extent approved by the commissioner, implement other research-based strategies designed to improve teacher retention rates.

The original bill further provided that the commissioner shall develop and implement an evaluation plan to identify the teacher retention demonstration projects most effective in increasing the retention of effective teachers. The evaluation must include an analysis of the relationship between specific teacher preparation models and teacher effectiveness and retention.

The commissioner shall disseminate evaluation findings through a statewide communication initiative.

The original bill adds a new section relating to teacher retention demonstration projects to the Education Code. The substitute bill does not do this, but rather expands upon current language in Section 21.657(a) that authorizes an eligible campus to use grant funds for programs proven to recruit and retain highly effective teachers. Program criteria are slightly different in the original and the substitute. The substitute does not reference induction and mentoring programs, nor is there a provision in the substitute relating to an evaluation plan as described above.