

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
80R7779 SLO-D

H.B. 2646
By: Rose (Watson)
Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that every classroom be taught by a highly qualified teacher. According to the Southern Regional Education Board, one indicator of progress in this area is when licensure and certification focus on performance and lead to ample numbers of teachers with content knowledge and proven teaching skills to improve student achievement. One measure of this is the number of teachers who have obtained national certification through the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), which sets rigorous standards for teachers' knowledge and skills.

With teacher quality and teacher training at the forefront of education policy discussions, NBPTS is the only organization of its kind helping states identify accomplished teachers. Nationwide, 47,000 teachers have achieved this status. As of May 2006, only 232 of these teachers were working in the State of Texas, ranking Texas 25th in the nation. One reason for this may be that the State of Texas offers no financial incentive for teachers to seek out this rigorous and expensive credential. In states such as North Carolina that reward teachers who obtain this certification with salary stipends, hundreds, if not thousands more seek out this credential.

More than 150 studies have examined National Board Certification with over 75 percent of the studies finding that national board-certified teachers make a significantly measurable impact on teacher performance, student learning, engagement, and activity. A 2005 nationwide study by the University of Washington found that those who hold this certification are having a greater effect on student progress than those without, particularly among low-income students in the early grades.

H.B. 2646 allows for Educator Excellence Award Funds to be used to provide stipends for teachers who obtain national certification through NBPTS.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 21.705, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 21.705. AWARD PAYMENTS. Requires grant funds remaining from the Educator Excellence Awards to be used only for certain purposes set forth in this subsection, including providing stipends to classroom teachers who have obtained national board certification through the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective to the 2007-2008 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.