

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2646
By: Rose
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

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 for Professional Teaching Standards, which sets rigorous standards for teachers' knowledge and skills. Nationwide, 47,000 teachers have achieved this status. As of May 2006, only 232 of these teachers were working in Texas. 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 worthwhile credential.

A 2005 study by the University of Washington examined the effectiveness of Nationally Board certified teachers and found that those who held this certification are having a greater effect on student progress than those without, particularly among low-income students in the early grades.

As proposed, this bill allows for Educator Excellence Program funds to be used to provide stipends for teachers who obtain national certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

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

The bill amends Section 21.705, Education Code to authorize school districts to use a portion of funds made available under the educator excellence award program to provide stipends to classroom teachers who have obtained national board certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

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.