

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 3259
By: Branch
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Today's Texas students will be tomorrow's workforce, competing in a global economy. Current academic testing assesses only that students have mastered objectives outlined in the TEKS. It is important that we know how our students stack up against students abroad.

House Bill 3259 establishes and specifies a funding source for a program for districts to administer international assessment tests to students in the districts, and allows the Commissioner of Education to compare the performance of Texas students to students of the same grade level in other countries. The results of student performance on the international assessments shall be reported to the specified elected officials, members of the Legislature, and each school district.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

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

ANALYSIS

The bill amends the Education Code to establish an international assessment instrument program under which a participating school district administers international assessment instruments to students in the district. A school district may apply to the commissioner to participate in the program. The commissioner shall select for participation school districts from both rural and urban areas of the state. If necessary, the commissioner may require a school district to participate in the program. A participating school district shall administer international assessment instruments as required by the commissioner.

In administering the program, the commissioner shall compare the performance on the international assessment instruments of students in this state with students of the same grade level in other countries, compare the international assessment instruments with state assessment instruments and state educational goals, and provide professional development for educators in the interpretation and use of results of the international assessment instruments.

Each biennium the commissioner may use funds appropriated for the Foundation School Program to provide funding for the program in an amount not to exceed \$2 million.

The commissioner shall prepare and deliver a report describing the results of student performance on the international assessment instruments to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, each member of the legislature, and each school district not later than January 1 of each odd-numbered year.

The commissioner may adopt rules necessary to administer the program.

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.