

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 282
By: Gallegos
Public Education
Committee Report (Amended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

High school to college transition programs demonstrate the state's commitment to maintaining access and affordability in higher education. These programs provide an opportunity for students to pursue rigorous advanced subjects sometimes available only at the college level and assist school districts in supporting gifted and talented education programs. Students may benefit from accelerating completion of their college degree programs, reducing the cost of their college education, and entering the work force sooner. High schools are a good place to begin recruiting students to participate in college-level courses and programs, but if parents are not informed about these programs then some college-bound students may miss opportunities to get a head start on their education. In order for the State of Texas to increase the number of Texans who attend and succeed in college, it must work with parents, high schools, and higher education institutions in order to increase the rate of participation and success of all Texans going to college.

In current law, each school district is required to implement a program under which a student may earn the equivalent of 12 semester credit hours of college credit in high school. However, school districts are not required to notify parents about these programs.

As proposed, this bill requires school districts to notify parents, whose children are in high school, about the availability of programs under which a student may earn college credit.

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 adds Section 28.010 to the Education Code, which provides that each school year, a school district shall notify the parent of each district student enrolled in grade nine or above of the availability of programs in the district under which a student may earn college credit, including advanced placement programs, dual credit programs, joint high school and college credit programs, and international baccalaureate programs. A school district may provide the notification required by such section on the district's Internet website. The notification must include the name and contact information of any public or private entity offering a program described by such section in the district.

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.

EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS

The amendment adds a new provision to the bill, which provides that during the first school year a student is enrolled in a high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment charter school, and again during a student's senior year, a counselor shall provide information about higher education to the student and the student's parent or guardian. The information must include information regarding the availability of programs in the district under which a student may earn college credit, including advanced placement programs, dual credit programs, joint high school and college credit programs, and international baccalaureate programs.