

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

S.B. 1344  
By: Watson  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Since 2007 there have been several accidental deaths on college campuses due to alcohol poisoning. Generally, those who died were freshmen or new fraternity pledges who had little to no experience with alcohol and had little understanding of its effects and dangers. While most colleges and universities have some kind of educational program relating to alcohol poisoning and binge drinking, such as an online course, handouts to freshmen, or a presentation during freshmen orientation, there is a clear lack of education in the middle and high school curriculum.

S.B. 1344 requires the State Board of Education to adopt essential knowledge and skills for the enrichment curriculum that address certain aspects of binge drinking and alcohol poisoning. The bill requires the Texas Education Agency to compile a list of evidence-based alcohol awareness programs from which a school district must choose a program to use in the district's middle school, junior high school, and high school health curriculum.

### **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**

S.B. 1344 amends the Education Code to require the State Board of Education, in adopting the essential knowledge and skills for the health enrichment curriculum, to adopt essential knowledge and skills that address the dangers, causes, consequences, signs, symptoms, and treatment of binge drinking and alcohol poisoning. The bill requires the Texas Education Agency to compile a list of evidence-based alcohol awareness programs from which a school district must choose a program to use in the district's middle school, junior high school, and high school health curriculum. The bill defines "evidence-based alcohol awareness program" to mean a program, practice, or strategy that has been proven to effectively prevent or delay alcohol use among students, as determined by evaluations that use valid and reliable measures and that are published in peer-reviewed journals.

S.B. 1344 makes its provisions applicable beginning with the 2009-2010 school year and provides that it shall be known as the Carson Starkey Alcohol Awareness and Education Act.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the act does not receive the necessary vote, the act takes effect September 1, 2009.