

By: Branch

H.B. No. 4238

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishing a state master plan for closing academic achievement gaps in public primary and secondary education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 39, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter A to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER A. STATE MASTER PLAN FOR CLOSING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
GAPS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

Sec. 39.001. SELECT COMMITTEE ON STATE MASTER PLAN.

(a) The Select Committee on the State Master Plan for Closing the Gaps in Public Education is established to develop and adopt a state master plan for closing gaps in student participation, student success, and overall educational excellence among public schools and school districts in this state and between public schools in this state and public schools in other states.

(b) The committee is composed of the following 15 members:

(1) the presiding officers of the standing committees of each house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over public education;

(2) one member of the senate, appointed by the lieutenant governor;

(3) one member of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(4) the commissioner;

1 (5) the commissioner of higher education;

2 (6) one member of the State Board of Education,
3 appointed by the chair of the board;

4 (7) one public school teacher, one public school
5 principal, and one school district superintendent, each currently
6 employed in this state and each appointed jointly by the lieutenant
7 governor and the speaker of the house of representatives;

8 (8) one person who is currently employed as an
9 educator in a public school in this state, other than as a teacher,
10 principal, or superintendent, and appointed jointly by the
11 lieutenant governor and the speaker of the house of
12 representatives;

13 (9) one representative from the business community or
14 the public, appointed by the lieutenant governor;

15 (10) one representative from the business community or
16 the public, appointed by the speaker of the house of
17 representatives; and

18 (11) one representative from the business community
19 and one representative from the public, at least one of whom has one
20 or more children who currently attend public school in this state,
21 appointed by the governor.

22 (c) The governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the
23 house of representatives shall make the appointments required by
24 Subsection (b) in a timely manner to permit the committee to comply
25 with Section 39.002(a).

26 Sec. 39.002. COMMITTEE MEETINGS. (a) Not later than
27 October 1, 2009, the committee shall hold an organizational

1 meeting.

2 (b) The presiding officers described by Section
3 39.001(b)(1) serve as co-chairs of the committee.

4 (c) Committee meetings shall be held at the joint call of
5 the co-chairs.

6 Sec. 39.003. COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT. (a) A member
7 of the committee is entitled to reimbursement for actual and
8 necessary expenses incurred in performing committee duties.

9 (b) A legislative member of the committee is entitled to
10 reimbursement from the appropriate fund of the house of the
11 legislature in which the member serves.

12 (c) A member other than a legislative member is entitled to
13 reimbursement from funds appropriated to the committee.

14 Sec. 39.004. COMMITTEE STAFF. Staff members of the
15 standing committees described by Section 39.001(b)(1) shall serve
16 as the staff of the committee.

17 Sec. 39.005. OBJECTIVES OF MASTER PLAN. (a) The committee
18 shall conduct a comprehensive review of the public primary and
19 secondary educational system in this state and develop a master
20 plan that includes goals and strategies for closing gaps in:

21 (1) student participation;

22 (2) student success; and

23 (3) overall educational excellence.

24 (b) In conducting its review and designing goals and
25 strategies, the committee shall study the mission, organizational
26 structure, design, processes, and practices of educational systems
27 in other states and relevant educational requirements established

1 by federal law.

2 (c) The master plan developed under this section must:

3 (1) include specific goals for:

4 (A) improving student achievement;

5 (B) reducing academic achievement gaps among
6 students in this state and between students in this state and
7 students of other states;

8 (C) reducing student dropout rates;

9 (D) increasing high school completion rates; and

10 (E) increasing readiness for postsecondary
11 learning and employment; and

12 (2) be consistent with:

13 (A) each element of the accountability system
14 prescribed by this chapter, with special emphasis on:

15 (i) the indicators used to determine
16 accreditation status;

17 (ii) rewards and incentives for campus and
18 school district excellence; and

19 (iii) the responsibilities of the
20 commissioner in assisting and, if necessary, imposing sanctions on
21 school districts and campuses that do not meet state performance
22 standards; and

23 (B) the goals in "Closing the Gaps," the state's
24 master plan for higher education.

25 (d) The master plan developed under this section must
26 specifically address strategies for achieving the goals described
27 by Subsection (c)(1) in an educational environment characterized by

1 a rapid growth in the number of educationally disadvantaged
2 students and of students of limited English proficiency as defined
3 by Section 29.052.

4 (e) The committee shall conduct public hearings throughout
5 this state and solicit testimony concerning the public education
6 system from parents of public school students and other interested
7 persons. At least one public hearing must be held at a public
8 school during a time that public school students are generally able
9 to attend the hearing.

10 (f) The commissioner shall ensure that, subject to state and
11 federal educational privacy laws, the committee has access to any
12 documentation and agency personnel the committee requests.

13 (g) The Legislative Budget Board, comptroller, state
14 auditor, and any other state agency, official, or personnel shall
15 cooperate with the committee in carrying out its duties under this
16 subchapter.

17 Sec. 39.006. MASTER PLAN. (a) Not later than December 1,
18 2010, the committee shall:

19 (1) adopt a master plan that includes goals and
20 strategies prescribed by Section 39.005; and

21 (2) prepare a report to the legislature with, as
22 necessary, any recommendations for statutory changes consistent
23 with the master plan.

24 (b) The master plan and report must be approved by a
25 majority of the committee members.

26 Sec. 39.007. EXPIRATION. This subchapter expires January
27 11, 2011.

1 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
2 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
3 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
4 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
5 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.