

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 149
By: West
Higher Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to the February 2009 Education Commission of the States report, *The Progress of Education Reform—Funding Dual Credit Programs*, more than 87 percent of America's public high schools offer their students the opportunity to gain college credit before graduation. Learning opportunities that allow students to gain college-level credit often are referred to as dual-credit programs, and the report notes that such programs are experiencing a growth in both the number of students who take advantage of them and the number of schools that offer them. One reason cited for the growth in dual-credit programs is that they are seen as a way to ease the transition from high school to postsecondary education or the workforce.

Texas high schools are following this national trend and increasingly are offering dual-credit courses to high school students. However, there needs to be a mutually beneficial and supportive partnership between the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, which needs to include rules that outline each agency's specific functions in relation to dual-credit programs and related reporting requirements.

As proposed, S.B. 149 amends current law relating to rules adopted and reporting required under the school district college credit program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 28.009, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 28.009, Education Code) of this bill.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 28.009(b), Education Code, as follows:

(b) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to coordinate with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) as necessary in administering this section. Authorizes the commissioner of education (commissioner) to adopt rules as necessary concerning the duties under this section of a school district. Authorizes THECB to adopt rules as necessary concerning the duties under this section of a public institution of higher education.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 28.009(c), Education Code, effective September 1, 2011, as follows:

(c) Requires each school district to annually report to TEA the number of district students, including career and technical students, who have participated in the College Credit Program (program) and the courses in which participating district students have earned high school credit under this section. Deletes existing text relating to having earned or enrolled in college credit hours and the cumulative number of courses.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 28.009(c), Education Code, effective September 1, 2013, to require the commissioner and THECB to share data as necessary to enable school districts to comply with this subsection.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 28.009, by adding Subsection (c-1), effective September 1, 2013, to require THECB to collect student course credit data from public institutions of higher education as necessary for purposes of Subsection (c).

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2011.