

By: Shapiro

S.B. No. 518

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to initiatives designed to improve performance of public  
3 school students enrolled at the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade  
4 levels.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 21.041, Education Code, is amended by  
7 adding Subsections (e), (f), (f-1), and (f-2) to read as follows:

8 (e) In proposing rules under Subsection (b)(2), the board  
9 shall ensure that a person seeking to teach a subject in the  
10 foundation curriculum under Section 28.002(a)(1) above the fifth  
11 grade level is required to hold a certificate that indicates the  
12 person's mastery of the specific subject taught. To achieve this  
13 result, the board:

14 (1) shall issue the following classes of certificates:

15 (A) English language arts: Early Childhood-Grade  
16 6;

17 (B) English language arts: Grades 6-12;

18 (C) mathematics: Early Childhood-Grade 6;

19 (D) mathematics: Grades 6-12;

20 (E) science: Early Childhood-Grade 6;

21 (F) science: Grades 6-12;

22 (G) social studies: Early Childhood-Grade 6; and

23 (H) social studies: Grades 6-12; and

24 (2) may not issue a generalist certificate that

1 authorizes a person to teach a subject in the foundation curriculum  
2 under Section 28.002(a)(1) above the fifth grade level.

3 (f) Subsection (e) applies to initial certificates issued  
4 on or after September 1, 2012. Subsection (e) does not affect the  
5 validity of a certificate issued before that date or the  
6 eligibility of a person holding such a certificate for subsequent  
7 renewals of the certificate in accordance with board rules.

8 (f-1) In implementing Subsection (e), the board shall  
9 ensure that:

10 (1) the subject area examinations administered to  
11 persons seeking Early Childhood-Grade 6 certificates under  
12 Subsection (e)(1) in English language arts, mathematics, science,  
13 or social studies are sufficiently rigorous to ensure that persons  
14 receiving those certificates are prepared to instruct students at a  
15 level that enables the students to meet desired student performance  
16 standards;

17 (2) the subject area examinations administered to  
18 persons seeking Grades 6-12 certificates under Subsection (e)(1) in  
19 English language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies are  
20 at least as rigorous as the examinations administered before  
21 September 1, 2012, to persons seeking Grades 8-12 certificates to  
22 teach in those subject areas; and

23 (3) the pedagogy examinations administered to persons  
24 seeking certificates under Subsection (e)(1) are revised to ensure  
25 rigor and relevance for each elementary, middle or junior high, and  
26 high school examination and a person seeking such a certificate is  
27 not permitted to take an Early Childhood-Grade 12 pedagogy

1 examination.

2 (f-2) Subsection (f-1) and this subsection expire September  
3 1, 2013.

4 SECTION 2. Section 21.4551, Education Code, is amended by  
5 adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

6 (b-1) In addition to the components described by Subsection  
7 (b), the commissioner shall ensure that each academy developed and  
8 made available under this section includes a component on providing  
9 students with writing instruction.

10 SECTION 3. Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, is  
11 amended by adding Section 28.015 to read as follows:

12 Sec. 28.015. HIGH SCHOOL READINESS PILOT PROGRAM. (a) The  
13 agency shall develop and implement a high school readiness pilot  
14 program under which:

15 (1) a participating school with students enrolled at  
16 the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade levels shall enroll all  
17 students at those levels in a student advisory class; and

18 (2) a participating high school shall provide annual  
19 high school orientation sessions for parents of students who are  
20 enrolled at the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade levels in the high  
21 school's attendance zone.

22 (b) An application to participate in the program may be  
23 submitted by an individual school or by a school district on behalf  
24 of multiple schools located in the district. To be eligible to  
25 participate in the component of the program described by Subsection  
26 (a)(1), a school must:

27 (1) be a school for which the district in which the

1 school is located receives funding under Title I of the Elementary  
2 and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Section 6301 et seq.)  
3 or be a school that, as determined by the commissioner, is a  
4 low-performing school under Chapter 39 or has a high percentage of  
5 students who are at risk of dropping out of school, as defined by  
6 Section 29.081(d); and

7           (2) have students enrolled at the seventh and eighth  
8 grade levels.

9           (c) The agency shall develop standards and guidelines for  
10 the student advisory class. The standards and guidelines must:

11                 (1) at a minimum, require that the class provide  
12 instruction about:

13                                 (A) school culture;

14                                 (B) school procedures;

15                                 (C) test-taking skills;

16                                 (D) study skills;

17                                 (E) positive academic behaviors;

18                                 (F) civic and community responsibility; and

19                                 (G) high school and college readiness;

20                 (2) permit the class to be offered as an electronic  
21 course through the state virtual school network under Chapter 30A;  
22 and

23                 (3) provide that the class be taught, if practicable,  
24 by an educator who does not instruct the enrolled students in other  
25 course work.

26           (d) The agency shall develop standards and guidelines for  
27 the high school orientation session. An orientation session must:

1           (1) prepare a parent for the transition to high school  
2 of the parent's child;

3           (2) allow a parent to meet and interact with high  
4 school teachers and administrators;

5           (3) provide a parent with information regarding:

6                 (A) high school curriculum, including the  
7 curriculum requirements for the minimum, recommended, and advanced  
8 high school programs under Section 28.025; and

9                 (B) high school options available to the parent's  
10 child, including any high school magnet programs, academies, or  
11 similar special programs available in the district;

12           (4) address the role of the parent in assisting the  
13 parent's child in performing successfully in high school; and

14           (5) provide a parent with a written document that  
15 addresses frequently asked questions from parents regarding the  
16 transition to high school.

17           SECTION 4. Subchapter C, Chapter 29, Education Code, is  
18 amended by adding Section 29.100 to read as follows:

19           Sec. 29.100. EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION;  
20 ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM AND FINANCIAL SANCTIONS. (a) In this  
21 section, "compensatory education funding" means amounts to which a  
22 school district is entitled under Section 42.152.

23           (b) Each year a school with students enrolled at the sixth,  
24 seventh, or eighth grade level shall identify the students at each  
25 of those grade levels who are at risk of dropping out of school, as  
26 defined by Section 29.081(d), or who are likely to become at risk of  
27 dropping out of school, as determined in accordance with rules

1 adopted by the commissioner.

2 (c) Not later than July 1 of each year, a school with  
3 students enrolled at a grade level from which students are promoted  
4 to high school must provide each high school to which students at  
5 the school are promoted with:

6 (1) the names of students entering the high school at  
7 the beginning of the next school year that have been identified  
8 under Subsection (b); and

9 (2) if applicable, the specific interventions used  
10 with each student named under Subdivision (1).

11 (d) Each year a school with students enrolled at the sixth,  
12 seventh, or eighth grade level shall determine and report to the  
13 agency:

14 (1) the specific interventions that the school will  
15 use to address the needs of students at risk of dropping out of  
16 school, as defined by Section 29.081(d), who are enrolled at the  
17 school at the sixth, seventh, or eighth grade level;

18 (2) the amount of compensatory education funding that  
19 will be used to pay the costs of each intervention; and

20 (3) the total amount of compensatory education funding  
21 that is allocated to the school by the school district.

22 (e) The commissioner shall develop an accountability system  
23 to ensure that compensatory education funding used for the benefit  
24 of students enrolled at the sixth, seventh, or eighth grade level  
25 who are at risk of dropping out of school, as defined by Section  
26 29.081(d), is efficiently spent on effective interventions. In  
27 developing the system, the commissioner shall establish:

1           (1) academic progress standards for those students  
2 designed to close the achievement gap between those students and  
3 students not at risk; and

4           (2) financial sanctions to be imposed against a  
5 district if students do not meet the standards established under  
6 Subdivision (1).

7           (f) As a form of financial sanction described by Subsection  
8 (e)(2), the commissioner shall withhold from a district's  
9 compensatory education funding an amount determined by the  
10 commissioner, not to exceed in any year an amount equal to 10  
11 percent of the district's total compensatory education funding  
12 entitlement for that year attributable to students enrolled at the  
13 sixth, seventh, or eighth grade level.

14           (g) The commissioner shall adopt rules necessary to  
15 implement this section.

16           SECTION 5. Section 42.152, Education Code, is amended by  
17 adding Subsection (t) to read as follows:

18           (t) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section,  
19 the commissioner shall withhold a portion of a district's allotment  
20 provided under Subsection (a) as required by Section 29.100(f).

21           SECTION 6. The commissioner of education shall implement  
22 Section 21.4551(b-1), Education Code, as added by this Act,  
23 beginning with reading academies offered on or after January 1,  
24 2012.

25           SECTION 7. The Texas Education Agency shall develop  
26 standards and guidelines for the student advisory class and high  
27 school orientation session in compliance with Section 28.015,

1 Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as possible after the  
2 effective date of this Act. The agency shall fully implement the  
3 pilot program required by Section 28.015, Education Code, as added  
4 by this Act, not later than the 2012-2013 school year.

5 SECTION 8. Sections 29.100 and 42.152(t), Education Code,  
6 as added by this Act, apply beginning with the 2012-2013 school  
7 year.

8 SECTION 9. Except as otherwise provided by this Act, this  
9 Act applies beginning with the 2011-2012 school year.

10 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect immediately if it  
11 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each  
12 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.  
13 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate  
14 effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2011.