

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1538
By: Van de Putte
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Interested parties contend that schools serving large populations of students who have previously dropped out and are recovering credits needed to graduate are not accurately measured under the state's public school accountability system. The parties assert that many of the students served by these schools are removed from the system altogether, meaning such students' accomplishments of staying in school and graduating is never credited to the school as a successful dropout recovery. This puts the schools in danger of being labeled as unacceptable and potentially being shut down merely because they serve the at-risk population they are intended to serve. S.B. 1538 seeks to address this problem by providing for the evaluation of the performance of public schools designated as dropout recovery schools.

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. 1538 amends the Education Code to require the commissioner of education, for purposes of evaluating district performance using indicators of student achievement, to designate as a dropout recovery school a school district or an open-enrollment charter school or a campus of a district or of an open-enrollment charter school that serves students in grades 9 through 12 and has an enrollment of which at least 50 percent of the students are 17 years of age or older as of September 1 of the school year as reported for the fall semester submission to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and that meets eligibility requirements for and is registered under alternative education accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner. The bill requires the commissioner to use the alternative completion rate to determine the student achievement indicator for a dropout recovery school and establishes the alternative completion rate as the ratio of the total number of students who graduate, continue attending school into the next academic year, or receive a high school equivalency certificate to the total number of students in the longitudinal cohort of students.

S.B. 1538 requires the commissioner, in determining the performance rating of a designated dropout recovery school, to include any student who the commissioner is required to exclude in computing dropout and completion rates with regard to student achievement indicators who graduates or receives a high school equivalency certificate. The bill limits a determination of a dropout recovery school's performance rating with respect to student test performance to a consideration of only the best result from the primary administration and any retake of a test administered to a student in the school year evaluated under the accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner. The bill's provisions apply beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2013.