

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 1843  
By: Aycock  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

For a student without proficient reading and comprehension skills, every other school subject can be incredibly difficult. Problematically, many students in Texas are not reading at a satisfactory level. Interested parties report that teacher quality is widely considered the most important school-related variable in improving student performance. Accordingly, the parties contend that a teacher must be afforded the necessary resources, training, and tools relating to student literacy and that the state should provide funding to establish a professional development program similar to a program created by previous reading initiatives in Texas. C.S.H.B. 1843 seeks to improve opportunities for teacher professional development.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **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**

C.S.H.B. 1843 amends the Education Code to require the commissioner of education to develop and make available literacy achievement academies for teachers who provide instruction to students at the prekindergarten, kindergarten, or first-grade, second-grade, or third-grade level. The bill requires a literacy achievement academy to include training in effective and systematic instructional practices in reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and research-based practices to address the needs of students with reading disorders. The bill requires the commissioner to adopt criteria for selecting teachers who may attend a literacy achievement academy and, in adopting selection criteria, to include teachers, including special education teachers, who instruct students with reading disorders and to require granting a priority to teachers employed by school districts in which 50 percent or more of the students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged. The bill entitles a teacher who attends a literacy achievement academy to receive a stipend in the amount determined by the commissioner from funds appropriated for that purpose. The bill specifies that such a stipend is not considered in determining whether a school district is paying the teacher the required minimum monthly salary. The bill requires regional education service centers, on request of the commissioner, to assist the commissioner and the Texas Education Agency with training and other activities relating to the development and operation of literacy achievement academies.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.

## COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 1843 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

### INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Subchapter J, Chapter 21, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 21.4552 to read as follows:

Sec. 21.4552. TEACHER LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT ACADEMIES. (a) The commissioner shall develop and make available literacy achievement academies for teachers who provide instruction to students at the kindergarten or first, second, or third grade level.

(b) A literacy achievement academy developed under this section must include training in effective and systematic instructional practices in reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

(c) The commissioner shall adopt criteria for selecting teachers who may attend a literacy achievement academy. In adopting selection criteria under this subsection, the commissioner shall

require granting a priority to teachers employed by school districts in which 50 percent or more of the students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged.

(d) From funds appropriated for that purpose, a teacher who attends a literacy achievement academy is entitled to receive a stipend in the amount determined by the commissioner. A stipend received under this subsection is not considered in determining whether a district is paying the teacher the minimum monthly salary under Section 21.402.

(e) On request of the commissioner, regional education service centers shall assist the commissioner and agency with training and other activities relating to the development and operation of literacy achievement academies.

### HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Subchapter J, Chapter 21, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 21.4552 to read as follows:

Sec. 21.4552. TEACHER LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT ACADEMIES. (a) The commissioner shall develop and make available literacy achievement academies for teachers who provide instruction to students at the **prekindergarten,** kindergarten, or first, second, or third grade level.

(b) A literacy achievement academy developed under this section must include training in effective and systematic instructional practices in reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, **vocabulary, comprehension, and research-based practices to address the needs of students with reading disorders.**

(c) The commissioner shall adopt criteria for selecting teachers who may attend a literacy achievement academy. In adopting selection criteria under this subsection, the commissioner shall:

(1) include teachers, including special education teachers, who instruct students **with reading disorders; and**

(2) require granting a priority to teachers employed by school districts in which 50 percent or more of the students enrolled are educationally disadvantaged.

(d) From funds appropriated for that purpose, a teacher who attends a literacy achievement academy is entitled to receive a stipend in the amount determined by the commissioner. A stipend received under this subsection is not considered in determining whether a district is paying the teacher the minimum monthly salary under Section 21.402.

(e) On request of the commissioner, regional education service centers shall assist the commissioner and agency with training and other activities relating to the development and operation of literacy achievement academies.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.