

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3748  
By: Farney  
Higher Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

According to interested parties, only a small percentage of children who are placed in foster care pursue higher education upon completing high school. Those who do face many struggles during their college careers, some deriving from a lack of strong family support and experience from which to draw, resulting in most of those students never completing their degree. The parties note that there are a number of resources available to students to assist in college, yet many former foster children are never made aware of them. H.B. 3748 seeks to address this problem through the coordination of educational support services for and information regarding students who currently are or have been in foster care.

### **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**

H.B. 3748 amends the Education Code to include as a means by which the Texas Education Agency (TEA) is to assist the transition of substitute care students from one school to another the designation of at least one TEA employee to act as a liaison officer regarding educational issues related to students in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS).

H.B. 3748 requires each institution of higher education and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, respectively, to designate at least one employee each to act as a liaison officer for current and incoming students who were formerly in the conservatorship of DFPS. The bill requires the liaison officer at an institution of higher education to provide to those students information regarding support services and other resources available to the students at the institution and any other relevant information to assist the students and requires the liaison officer at the coordinating board to assist in coordinating college readiness and student success efforts relating to such students.

H.B. 3748 requires the coordinating board and DFPS, not later than January 1, 2016, to enter into a memorandum of understanding regarding the exchange of information as appropriate to facilitate DFPS's evaluation of educational outcomes of students at institutions of higher education who were formerly in the conservatorship of DFPS. The bill requires the memorandum to require DFPS to provide the coordinating board each year with demographic information regarding individual students enrolled at institutions of higher education who were

formerly in the conservatorship of DFPS following an adversarial hearing and to require the coordinating board, in a manner consistent with federal law, to provide DFPS with aggregate information regarding educational outcomes of students for whom the coordinating board received such demographic information. The bill includes among information regarding educational outcomes information relating to student academic achievement, graduation rates, attendance, and other educational outcomes as determined by the coordinating board and DFPS.

H.B. 3748 authorizes DFPS to authorize the coordinating board to provide education research centers with demographic information regarding individual students received by the coordinating board from DFPS as appropriate to allow the centers to perform additional analysis regarding educational outcomes of students in foster care. The bill requires any use of information regarding individual students provided to a center to be approved by DFPS. The bill prohibits anything in the bill's provisions relating to the memorandum of understanding from being construed to require the coordinating board or DFPS to collect or maintain additional information regarding students formerly in the conservatorship of DFPS or to allow the release of information regarding an individual student in a manner not permitted under federal or state law.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

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