

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1561
By: Taylor, Van
Education
5/5/2017
Committee Report (Amended)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

State law requires that each school district that offers kindergarten through grade 12 provide a required curriculum known as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, or TEKS. The State Board of Education (SBOE) is responsible for developing, by rule, the essential knowledge and skills of each subject of the required curriculum. Interested parties observe that the amount of material incorporated within the TEKS, whether by SBOE rule or statute approved by the legislature, has grown since curriculum standards were first adopted by the legislature in 1979.

Just as schools are required to provide instruction in the TEKS, state law requires that each school district's school year provide for 75,600 minutes of instruction each school year, with a minimum of 420 minutes of instruction per day. Given this limitation, interested parties ask whether the amount of time authorized by law for a school year provides sufficient opportunity to adequately instruct students on the TEKS. Interested parties observe that while some studies have evaluated the length of time needed to provide required instruction in other states, Texas lacks such an analysis.

S.B. 1561 requires that SBOE study the length of the instructional day and of the academic year needed to complete the TEKS. The study must be made available to members of the legislature and the governor by October 2018. The results of the study would better inform policymakers whether Texas allows enough time for students to receive instruction in the TEKS. (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

As proposed, S.B. 1561 amends current law relating to a study by the State Board of Education on the instructional day and academic year requirements necessary to complete the required curriculum in public schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. (a) Requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to conduct a study to determine, for kindergarten through 12th grade, the length of the instructional day and of the academic year that would be necessary to allow for the completion of the required curriculum identified by SBOE under Section 28.002 (Required Curriculum), Education Code.

(b) Requires SBOE, not later than October 1, 2018, to deliver a report containing the results of the study to the governor and the legislature.

(c) Provides that this Act expires September 1, 2019.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.

SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE CHANGES

(1) Adds the following appropriately numbered SECTION to the bill and renumbers existing SECTIONS of the bill appropriately:

SECTION __. Provides that this Act takes effect only if a specific appropriation for the implementation of the Act is provided in a general appropriations act of the 85th Legislature.