BILL ANALYSIS

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is widely accepted that students must have their non-academic needs met before they can successfully learn. Texas recognizes this fact through additional funding for students in the compensatory education program, which includes students who are homeless, in institutional care, pregnant, or otherwise at risk of dropping out of school. These students, as well as those from low-income families generally, face challenges outside the classroom that can weigh heavily on them throughout the school day. If schools do not make efforts to work with students to overcome these barriers, these students are far more likely to fall behind, repeat grades, or drop out of school altogether. Fortunately, many schools do take steps to address these needs, but the broad nature of these issues makes it difficult to coordinate the different approaches schools take in this area.

S.B. 1699 maximizes the benefits of districts' existing resources by creating a framework that identifies and coordinates various state, district, campus, and community resources that can be used to address students' non-academic barriers to learning. Developing an inventory of best-practice programs will help schools better leverage the resources they already have and avoid duplication of effort on multiple programs targeting the same problems. By aiding school districts in identifying and deploying relevant programs to help students overcome barriers to learning, S.B. 1699 encourages schools in their efforts to improve performance among these most vulnerable students.

As proposed, S.B. 1699 amends current law relating to a model framework to address certain barriers to student learning.

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. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 38, Education Code, by adding Section 38.034, as follows:

> Sec. 38.034. MODEL FRAMEWORK TO ADDRESS CERTAIN BARRIERS TO STUDENT LEARNING. (a) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in coordination with certain entities, to develop a model framework to assist school districts in identifying and coordinating, to the greatest extent possible, an array of existing school-based and community-based programs and resources to maximize the individual and collective impact of those programs and resources for certain purposes.

> (b) Authorizes the model framework developed under Subsection (a) to include programs and resources, including certain strategies.

> (c) Requires TEA, in coordination with regional education service centers, to provide school districts with certain training and technical assistance.

(d) Requires TEA to coordinate with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to identify institutions of higher education (IHE) and certain private or independent IHEs with expertise in the strategies described by Subsection (2) (relating to the use of developmentally appropriate, evidence-based strategies in reducing the use of exclusionary discipline practices in prekindergarten programs and special education programs). Requires TEA, to the greatest extent possible, to partner with those institutions to provide training technical assistance, and information to school districts on using the programs and resources, including strategies identified under the model framework.

(e) Requires TEA to identify best practices in addressing nonacademic barriers to learning that are implemented in school districts and communities in this state.

(f) Requires TEA to develop and implement a plan to facilitate peer-to-peer learning among school districts and community-based providers and to replicate the best practices described by Subsection (e).

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