

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1813
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Higher Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Students applying to certain institutions of higher education in Texas utilize the Apply-TEXAS application process. This process allows students to fill out one uniform application online and submit it to participating universities through the website. Currently, the Apply-TEXAS application is used by all public universities as well as a number of private institutions in Texas. Uniformity in the process has allowed students to better prepare for their application and devote time to one application rather than repeating the process for each school.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is responsible for administering the Apply-TEXAS application. To oversee this process, the THECB has created an advisory board, which is currently comprised of representatives from general academic teaching institutions, junior college districts, public state colleges, and public technical institutions. However, interested parties have suggested that the current structure of the board would benefit by expanding the board to include additional stakeholder representatives.

To address this issue, S.B. 1813 seeks the inclusion of high school counselors and a representative from a private or independent institution of higher education in the advisory committee.

As proposed, S.B. 1813 amends current law relating to common admission application forms for institutions of higher education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is modified in SECTION 2 (Section 51.762, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority previously granted to THECB is rescinded in SECTION 4 (Section 51.762, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 51.761, Education Code, to define "private or independent institution of higher education."

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 51.762(a), (f), and (h), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), with the assistance of high school counselors and an advisory committee composed of representatives of certain academic institutions, including private or independent institutions of higher education, rather than with the consultation of all institutions of higher education that admit freshmen-level students:

(1) is required to adopt by rule:

(A) a common admission application form for use by a person seeking admission, rather than a person seeking admission as a freshman student, to a general academic teaching institution;

(B) an electronic common admission application form for use by a person seeking admission to an institution of higher education, rather than a person seeking admission as a freshman student to an institution of higher education that admits freshman-level students, other than a general academic teaching institution; and

(C) makes no changes to this paragraph; and

(2) makes no changes to this subdivision.

(f) Requires THECB to ensure that copies of the common admission application forms, rather than copies of the freshman common admission application forms, appropriate for use by a person seeking admission to an institution of higher education as a freshman student and information for the use of the forms are available in electronic format to the appropriate personnel, rather than for distribution to the appropriate personnel, at each public high school in this state.

(h) Authorizes an applicant to file, and requires each institution of higher education to accept, an application for admission, rather than an application for admission as an entering freshman or undergraduate transfer student, that uses the appropriate form adopted under this section.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 51.763(a), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 4. Repealer: Section 51.762(b) (relating to authorizing THECB by rule to adopt a certain common application form), Education Code.

SECTION 5. Provides that the changes in law made by this Act apply beginning with applications for admission to institutions of higher education for the 2018-2019 academic year.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.