

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1453
By: Taylor
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been reported that many public school districts require middle and high school students to purchase graphing calculators for certain math courses and standardized tests, even though low-cost or no-cost calculator applications with the same functionality as a graphing calculator have recently become available. S.B. 1453 seeks to require districts to permit students to use this cheaper option.

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

S.B. 1453 amends the Education Code to require a public school district to permit a student enrolled in a course that requires the student to use a graphing calculator to use a calculator application that provides the same functionality on a computing device unless the district makes a graphing calculator available to the student at no cost to the student. The bill authorizes a district to adopt policies related to student use of a computing device for the purpose described by the bill and establishes that, to the extent the bill's provisions conflict with statutory provisions relating to an optional district policy regarding a student's possession of a paging device, the bill's provisions prevail. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is required to implement a provision of the bill only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. If the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, TEA may, but is not required to, implement such a provision using other appropriations available for that purpose. The bill applies beginning with the 2019-2020 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.