

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 2107
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas schools are evaluated using the state's accountability system to ensure they provide an adequate education to all students. The accountability system currently makes several provisions for dropout recovery schools, which serve older students who have dropped out of school and wish to make up enough credit to graduate, as not all indicators in the system can be sensibly applied to this student population. However, stakeholders indicate that recent updates to the accountability system have not been matched with appropriate changes to the provisions that affect dropout recovery schools. Without changes tailored to the specific mission of these schools, the prospect of negative accountability consequences will discourage dropout recovery programs from fulfilling their important role in the Texas education system.

S.B. 2107 supports the continued operations of dropout recovery schools by creating an accountability framework within the current system that reflects the needs of the students in such programs. Specifically, the bill prevents dropout programs from being penalized for student test scores that meet a passing threshold, but not the higher thresholds of "masters" or "meets grade level," as their student populations are by definition entirely composed of at-risk students. By continuing to hold dropout recovery schools accountable using a standard that reflects their special role, S.B. 2107 will allow such programs to continue to offer the opportunity to gain high school credit for students who have dropped out of school.

As proposed, S.B. 2107 amends current law relating to evaluating the performance of dropout recovery schools for purposes of the public school accountability system.

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 Section 39.0548, Education Code, by amending Subsections (a) and (d) and adding Subsections (a-1), (e), (f), (g), and (h), as follows:

(a) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner), for purposes of evaluating performance under Section 39.053(c) (relating to requiring school districts to be evaluated on certain domains of indicators of achievement), to designate as a dropout recovery school a school district or an open-enrollment charter school or a campus of a district or of an open-enrollment charter school:

(1) makes no changes to this subdivision;

(2) that is registered under alternative education accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner, rather than that meets the eligibility requirements for and is registered under alternative education accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner.

(a-1) Requires the commissioner, for purposes of assigning performance ratings under Section 39.054 (Methods and Standards For Evaluating Performance), to evaluate a

dropout recovery school under alternative education accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner.

(d) Provides that for purposes of evaluating a dropout recovery school under the alternative education accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner, only the best result from the primary administration or any retake of an assessment instrument administered to a student in the school year evaluated may be considered in assigning performance ratings for the school under Section 39.054, rather than providing that, notwithstanding Section 39.053(c), for purposes of evaluating a dropout recovery school under the accountability procedures adopted by the commissioner to determine the performance rating of the school under Section 39.054, only the best result from the primary administration or any retake of an assessment instrument administered to a student in the school year evaluated may be considered.

(e) Authorizes the commissioner, for purposes of evaluating performance of a dropout recovery school under the student achievement domain under Section 39.053(c)(1) (relating to requiring school districts and campuses to be evaluated on the student achievement domain, which includes certain information), to consider for purposes of assigning a domain performance rating under Section 39.054 student performance based only on the "approaches grade level" performance standard. Prohibits any evaluation of student performance based on a higher performance standard from being considered to negatively affect the domain performance rating or a performance target score of the school.

(f) Authorizes the commissioner, for purposes of evaluating performance of a dropout recovery school under the school progress domain under Section 39.053(c)(2) (relating to requiring school districts and campuses to be evaluated on the school progress domain that includes certain information), to award credit for academic growth for purposes of assigning a domain performance rating under Section 39.054 based only on a student reaching the "approaches grade level" performance standard. Prohibits any evaluation of student performance based on reaching a higher academic growth performance standard from being considered to negatively affect the amount of credit awarded to the school or the domain performance rating or a performance target score of the school.

(g) Requires the commissioner, for purposes of assigning an overall performance rating for a dropout recovery school under Section 39.054, to consider only the school's domain performance ratings under the student achievement domain under Section 39.053(c)(1) and the school progress domain under Section 39.053(c)(2).

(h) Authorizes the performance of a dropout recovery school under the closing the gaps domain under Section 39.053(c)(3) to be used for reporting purposes only.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2019–2020 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.