

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 2465
By: Gervin-Hawkins
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

It has been suggested that children should be exposed to curriculum that reflects the cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity found throughout Texas. There have been calls to expand the enrichment curriculum offered by public schools to include cultural inclusion curriculum that seeks to encourage a student's sense of self, acceptance of diversity, critical thinking about biases, and empathy toward others. H.B. 2465 seeks to address this issue by requiring the State Board of Education to develop cultural inclusion curriculum for use as part of the enrichment curriculum for public schools.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the State Board of Education in SECTION 2 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 2465 amends the Education Code to require each public school district that offers kindergarten through grade 12 to offer cultural inclusion as part of the required enrichment curriculum. The bill requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to develop curriculum on cultural inclusivity that a district or charter school must use in the district's or charter school's cultural inclusivity courses. The curriculum must encourage the following:

- a student's sense of self;
- an acceptance of diversity through the identification and exploration of differences;
- critical thinking about bias through the identification and exploration of discrimination and stereotypes;
- empathy toward others; and
- advocating for oneself in the face of bias.

H.B. 2465 requires the SBOE, in developing the cultural inclusion curriculum, to consult with interested parties and authorizes the SBOE to create a work group of volunteers to make recommendations regarding the curriculum. The bill requires the SBOE, before finalizing the curriculum, to provide a reasonable period for public comment and authorizes a district or charter school, subject to rules adopted by the SBOE, to tailor the curriculum as appropriate for the district's or charter school's community. The bill requires the district or charter school, in tailoring the instruction, to solicit input from the SBOE, the Texas Education Agency, community members, and other interested individuals or organizations.

H.B. 2465 applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2021.