

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2721
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Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

University Interscholastic League (UIL) events provide a venue for healthy competition that gives students firsthand development in the concepts of mutual respect and fair play. Incidents where a referee, judge, or official in a UIL event is assaulted based on his or her performance in an event go against the core mission of the league, and have no place in the good-natured competition it is meant to foster. Unfortunately, there is little guidance on how the league may deal with a player whose conduct rises to this level, and whether it is appropriate for that player to continue to participate in UIL activities. Without any deterrent in place, there is concern for UIL officials' safety and willingness to continue serving as impartial judges in these competitions

H.B. 2721 provides an effective deterrent against mistreatment of UIL officials by banning any student who assaults an official from future UIL competition. For such a ban to take place, the student must engage in conduct that contains the elements of assault, as defined in the Penal Code, against a UIL official in retaliation for or as a result of the official's actions in officiating the event. The bill also lays out a limited appeals process in the same way that a student may appeal any other decision excluding them from UIL participation. By placing this deterrent in effect, H.B. 2721 enhances the safety of UIL officials and strengthens the league's mission of fostering fair competition that builds positive character traits in all participants.

H.B. 2721 amends current law relating to prohibiting a student from participating in future extracurricular activities for certain conduct involving the assault of an extracurricular activity official.

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 33.081, Education Code, by adding Subsection (e-1) and amending Subsections (f) and (g), as follows:

(e-1) Requires that a student who is enrolled in a school district in this state or who participates in a University Interscholastic League (UIL) competition be prohibited from participation in any future extracurricular activity sponsored or sanctioned by the school district or UIL if the student engages in conduct that contains the elements of the offense of assault under Section 22.01(a)(1) (relating to a person committing an offense by causing bodily injury to another), Penal Code:

(1) against a person serving as referee, judge, or other official of an extracurricular activity, and

(2) in retaliation for or as a result of the person's actions taken in performing the duties of a referee, judge, or other official of the extracurricular activity.

(f) Creates an exception under Subsection (e-1).

(g) Provides that an appeal to the commissioner of education is not a contested case under Chapter 2001 (Administrative Procedure), Government Code, if certain issues presented

relate to a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities, including the student's eligibility based on conduct described by Subsection (e-1).

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.