

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 123
By: Johnson
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Research demonstrates that the benefits of social and emotional learning (SEL) in schools are myriad. In addition to being correlated with improvements in levels of students' emotional distress, SEL programs have shown an 11 percentile-point gain in students' overall academic performance and a six percent increase in high school graduation rates. Certain SEL programs have also shown an average 11-to-1 return on investment, and economists, employers, and corporate leaders are increasingly acknowledging that SEL is crucial for student success in today's economy. S.B. 123 seeks to incorporate specified social and emotional learning competencies into an existing character traits instruction program in state curriculum standards for kindergarten through grade 12.

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. 123 amends the Education Code to require the State Board of Education to integrate the following personal skills into applicable state curriculum standards adopted for kindergarten through grade 12:

- self-management skills;
- interpersonal skills; and
- responsible decision-making skills.

The bill includes those skills among the contents of the character education program that each public school district and open-enrollment charter school is required to adopt. The bill's provisions apply beginning with the 2022-2023 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.