

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R7420 JES-D

S.B. 1144
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Expulsion from school can be a life-altering event for a student. An expelled student loses access to a school that may be the only positive environment in that student's life. The student also faces a much more difficult path to finish high school, pursue higher education, and move on to a rewarding career.

Expulsion is necessary at times as a means of discipline and to protect the safety of other students and teachers. It also is required under Texas law for particularly egregious behavior and certain crimes. When expulsion is discretionary, however, it should be used as a last resort because of its potential for lifelong repercussions. For some students facing expulsion, virtual education may be a way for them to be removed from the school environment but still continue their education. S.B. 1144 requires a public school to explore this option before expelling a student. The school is not required to enroll the student in virtual education before expulsion but only consider this option.

As proposed, S.B. 1144 amends current law relating to enrolling a public school student in the state virtual school network as an alternative to expulsion.

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 Subchapter A, Chapter 37, Education Code, by adding Section 37.0071, as follows:

Sec. 37.0071. VIRTUAL EDUCATION AS ALTERNATIVE TO EXPULSION. (a) Requires a school district or open-enrollment charter school to consider the appropriateness and feasibility of enrolling a student in a full-time virtual education program through the state virtual school network under Chapter 30A (State Virtual School Network) as an alternative to expulsion, before the district or school is authorized to expel the student, except as provided by Subsection (b).

(b) Provides that Subsection (a) does not apply to a student expelled under Section 37.0081 (Expulsion and Placement of Certain Students in Alternative Settings) or 37.007(a) (relating to requiring a student to be expelled for certain offenses committed on school property or while attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity on or off of school property), (d) (relating to the expulsion of a student for certain offenses against an employee or volunteer), or (e) (relating to requiring a school district, home-rule school district, or open-enrollment charter school to expel a student who brings a firearm to school).

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2023–2024 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2023.