

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.S.B. 2124
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Education
4/19/2023
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Delays caused by unfinished learning limit students' ability to enroll in higher level courses and achieve postsecondary success. For example, current statistics show that only 1 in 5 students whose highest high school math course was Algebra II earned a two-year or four-year college degree or an industry certificate within six years of high school graduation.

Currently, middle school students are placed in advanced math courses when a teacher, counselor, or parent recommends the student be enrolled in those courses. However, there are many more students whose test scores and grades indicate that they are ready to take advanced math courses who simply never receive a recommendation and are placed in regular math classes.

S.B. 2124 requires school districts to establish an opt-out policy to enroll students who are performing in the top two quintiles (40%) on the fifth grade state standardized assessment or a local measure that includes class score and/or demonstrated proficiency in classwork, into accelerated math in sixth grade to improve chances of gaining access to Algebra I in eighth grade.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 2124 amends current law relating to an advanced mathematics program for public school students in middle school.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 28.029, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 28, Education Code, by adding Section 28.029, as follows:

Sec. 28.029. MIDDLE SCHOOL ADVANCED MATHEMATICS PROGRAM. (a) Requires each school district and open-enrollment charter school, to increase the number of students who complete advanced mathematics courses in high school, to develop an advanced mathematics program for middle school students that is designed to enable those students to enroll in Algebra I in eighth grade.

(b) Requires a school district or open-enrollment charter school, under the program, subject to Subsection (c), to automatically enroll in an advanced mathematics course each sixth grade student who performed in the top 40 percent on:

(1) the fifth grade mathematics assessment instrument administered under Section 39.023(a) (relating to requiring the Texas Education Agency to adopt or develop appropriate criterion-referenced assessment instruments designed to assess essential knowledge and skills in certain subjects); or

(2) a local measure that includes the student's fifth grade class ranking or a demonstrated proficiency in the student's fifth grade mathematics coursework.

(c) Authorizes the parent or guardian of a student described by Subsection (b) to opt the student out of automatic enrollment under that subsection.

(d) Authorizes the commissioner of education to adopt rules to implement this section.

SECTION 2. Requires each school district or open-enrollment charter school, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to develop the middle school advanced mathematics program required by Section 28.029, Education Code, as added by this Act.

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