

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 2141
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently under Texas statute, it is required that the essential knowledge and skills for the technology applications curriculum for kindergarten through grade eight adopt essential knowledge and skills that include coding, computer programming, computational thinking, and cybersecurity.

However, including technology curriculum in elementary education can be dangerous for young students as it may shift their focus away from the development of fundamental skills and towards technical skills. Students may become fixated on learning how to use technology rather than developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative skills. This can hinder their ability to adapt to new situations and think independently. Moreover, the use of technology in the classroom may lead to reduced engagement and socialization, as students may become more interested in their screens than in interacting with their peers. Additionally, exposure to technology at a young age can have negative effects on physical and emotional development, such as disrupted sleep patterns, decreased physical activity, and increased exposure to cyberbullying and other online risks.

S.B. 2141 seeks to protect Texas children by requiring that technology application curriculum integration be postponed until after the fifth grade, thus ensuring that children can remain children and develop the necessary socialization and problem solving skills.

S.B. 2141 makes changes to Section 28.002 of the Education Code to mandate that the technology applications curriculum for elementary education may not be adopted from kindergarten to grade five. These essential knowledge and skills include coding, computer programming, computational thinking, or cybersecurity. This does not apply to keyboard use or Internet safety.

As proposed, S.B. 2141 amends current law relating to the essential knowledge and skills of the technology applications curriculum for public school students.

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 28.002(c-3), Education Code, as follows:

(c-3) Requires the State Board of Education (SBOE), in adopting the essential knowledge and skills for the technology applications curriculum for kindergarten through grade eight, to adopt essential knowledge and skills that include Internet safety and keyboard use. Prohibits SBOE from adopting essential knowledge and skills for the technology applications curriculum for kindergarten through grade five that include coding, computer programming, computational thinking, or cybersecurity, or that would require the use of electronic devices, digital instruction, or the Internet, for any purpose other than as necessary for Internet safety curriculum or keyboard use curriculum. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

SECTION 2. Requires SBOE, not later than December 31, 2024, to review and revise, as needed, the essential knowledge and skills of the technology applications curriculum as required by Section 28.002(c-3), Education Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2023.