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| BILL ANALYSIS |

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| S.B. 2314 |
| By: Creighton |
| Higher Education |
| Committee Report (Unamended) |

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| **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**  Direct Admissions, administered through the My Texas Future website, is a unique tool that provides Texas students with a list of participating institutions of higher education that will accept them before they even begin the college application process. This is currently an opt-in initiative. The bill sponsor has informed the committee that applying for college can be daunting; direct admissions has the potential to reduce time, boost confidence, increase transparency, and encourage Texans who might not otherwise consider college to take the next step and pursue postsecondary education. S.B. 2314 seeks to streamline the college admissions process by increasing access to the My Texas Future portal. |
| **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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 4 of this bill. |
| **ANALYSIS**  **Direct Admissions and Financial Aid Portal at MyTexasFuture.Org**  S.B. 2314 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to create, maintain, and administer, as a direct admissions and financial aid portal, an electronic platform and submission portal, known as My Texas Future (MyTexasFuture.Org), to facilitate the awareness and application of public high school students into institutions of higher education.  S.B. 2314 requires My Texas Future, or any successor electronic platform, to include the following:   * a link or direct submission portal to the electronic common admission application form adopted and established pursuant to applicable state law; * a direct admissions program that lists institutions of higher education to which a student may be directly admitted based on the student's profile and information; * to the greatest extent possible, a list of financial aid awards that a student may be eligible to receive based on the student's profile and information; and * the data required under applicable state law to assist students in assessing the value of postsecondary credentials by program.   S.B. 2314 requires a public school district or an open-enrollment charter school, as part of the high school registration process, to annually notify, in a manner prescribed by THECB rule, each parent or guardian of a student who has earned at least three high school course credits, or not later than the end of a student's first semester of ninth grade, of the following:   * the option to create or update annually a profile and account in My Texas Future; * that a student or the student's parent is permitted to update or revise their own profile in My Texas Future; * that a student or parent of a student who creates a profile and account may opt out of one or more programs offered under My Texas Future; and * the graduation requirement established under the bill for a student or parent to indicate whether the student wishes to opt in to allowing the THECB to share the student's data and educational records with institutions of higher education for the purpose of participating in the direct admissions program.   The bill requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the THECB to jointly prepare and post on each entity's respective website a publication that includes the aforementioned information in a form that enables a district or charter school to reproduce the publication for distribution. The bill requires TEA and each district or charter school to make the applicable data available to the THECB necessary to administer My Texas Future. The bill authorizes the THECB to adopt rules necessary to implement My Texas Future.  S.B. 2314 authorizes the THECB to share a student's contact information in MyTexasFuture.Org with an institution of higher education unless the student opts out of sharing the student's contact information and requires the THECB to ensure that a student may opt out of sharing such information with such an institution. Any student information shared with an institution of higher education is confidential as provided by the bill. The bill accordingly provides that, notwithstanding any other provision of law, and except as provided by the applicable bill provision, information that relates to a current, former, or prospective applicant or student of an educational institution and that is obtained, received, or held by the THECB for the purpose of administering My Texas Future or otherwise providing assistance with access to postsecondary education is confidential and excepted from disclosure under state public information law and may only be released in conformity with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The bill authorizes the THECB to withhold information prohibited from being disclosed under these bill provisions without requesting a decision from the attorney general under state law.  These bill provisions relating to MyTexasFuture.Org apply beginning with the 2025‑2026 academic year.  **Required Publication and Notice**  S.B. 2314 requires each institution of higher education to publish prominently on its admission application website a link to MyTexasFuture.Org, or its successor electronic platform, and to provide notice to students that they may apply to the institution of higher education using the electronic common admission application form found in ApplyTexas.Org or via MyTexasFuture.Org.  **Direct Admissions Data Sharing Opt-In Election for High School Graduation**  S.B. 2314 requires each student, before graduating from high school, to elect whether to opt in to allowing the THECB to share the student's data and education records, as necessary, with institutions of higher education to allow the student to participate in the direct admissions program. However, the bill establishes that a student is not required to comply with that requirement under the following conditions:   * if the student's parent or other person standing in parental relation submits a signed form indicating that the parent or other person authorizes the student to decline to complete and submit information necessary to participate in the direct admissions program; * if the student signs and submits that form on the student's own behalf if the student is 18 years of age or older or the student's disabilities of minority have been applicably removed; or * if a school counselor gives written authorization for the student to decline to complete and submit the information necessary to participate in the direct admissions program.   The bill requires each district or charter school to use a form adopted by the THECB, in consultation with TEA, to allow a student to opt out of the direct admissions program. The form must, as follows:   * provide the student or the student's parent or other person standing in parental relation, as applicable, the opportunity to elect whether to share the student's data or education records, as necessary, with institutions of higher education to facilitate the student's participation in the direct admissions program; and * be made available in English, Spanish, and any other language spoken by a majority of the students enrolled in a bilingual education or special language program in the district or charter school.   S.B. 2314 includes the bill provision's relating to the election for direct admissions data sharing as one of the statutory requirements with which a student must comply in order to graduate and receive a high school diploma. The bill's provisions relating to high school graduation requirements apply beginning with the 2026-2027 academic year. |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE**  On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025. |