

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1241
By: Middleton
Education K-16
6/9/2025
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current Texas law grants preference to the SAT and ACT as the primary college entrance exams for state-supported educational benefits and university admissions. These tests are recognized under multiple provisions of the Texas Education Code, including statutes that provide state funding for students to take them, allow their use for automatic admissions to public universities, and count them toward high school graduation requirements. However, concerns have arisen regarding the College Board, which administers the SAT, and its perceived ideological influence on educational materials. Critics argue that College Board's alignment with Common Core, declining test rigor, and controversial content in Advanced Placement (AP) curricula do not align with Texas education policies.

To address these concerns and introduce competition in the college readiness assessment market, S.B. 1241 seeks to expand the range of acceptable exams used for university admissions, allowing for additional test options such as the Classic Learning Test (CLT). The CLT, which aligns with a classical education model, has been adopted in other states such as Florida and is currently accepted by some Texas universities.

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

S.B. 1241 amends current law relating to the consideration of college entrance examinations for admission to certain public institutions of higher education and a study by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board regarding those examinations.

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 51.803(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Requires each general academic teaching institution, subject to Subsection (a-1) (relating to providing specific requirements for automatic admission at The University of Texas at Austin), to admit an applicant for admission to the institution as an undergraduate student if the applicant graduated with a grade point average in the top 10 percent of the student's high school graduating class in one of the two school years preceding the academic year for the applicant is applying for admission and:

(1) makes no changes to this subdivision;

(2) the applicant successfully completed certain curriculum requirements or achieved a score set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) on a college entrance examination designated by THECB rule, rather than satisfied ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT assessment applicable to the applicant or earned on the SAT assessment a score of at least 1,500 out of 2,400 or the equivalent; and

(3) makes no changes to this subdivision.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 51.805(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Authorizes a graduating student who does not qualify for admission under Section 51.803 (Automatic Admission) or 51.804 (Additional Automatic Admissions) to apply to any general academic teaching institution if the student successfully completed certain requirements or achieved a score set by THECB on a college entrance examination designated by THECB rule, rather than satisfied ACT's College Readiness Benchmarks on the ACT assessment applicable to the applicant or earned on the SAT assessment a score of at least 1,500 out of 2,400 or the equivalent.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter U, Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Section 51.8031, as follows:

Sec. 51.8031. STUDY ON COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION SCORES. (a) Defines "coordinating board."

(b) Requires THECB to conduct a study on college entrance examinations to determine which examinations, and the requisite score for each examination, should be used as a criterion for admission to a general academic teaching institution.

(c) Requires that the study achieve certain aims.

(d) Requires THECB, not later than August 1, 2026, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the chair of each standing legislative committee with primary jurisdiction over higher education a report on the results of the study and any recommendations for legislative or other action.

(e) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2027.

SECTION 4. Provides that the changes in law made by this Act to Sections 51.803(a) and 51.805(a), Education Code, apply beginning with admissions to a general academic teaching institution for the 2028 fall semester. Provides that admissions to a general academic teaching institution for a term or semester before the 2028 fall semester are governed by the law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 5. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.