

SUBJECT:	Revising provisions on dropout recovery education programs
COMMITTEE:	Public Education — favorable, without amendment
VOTE:	10 ayes — Buckley, Allison, Cunningham, Dutton, Cody Harris, Harrison, Hefner, K. King, Longoria, Schaefer 3 nays — Allen, Hinojosa, Talarico
SENATE VOTE:	On final passage (May 2) — 22 - 9
WITNESSES:	For — Chris Dickinson (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i> : Amanda List, AList Consulting; Jean Mayer, Pflugerville ISD) Against — (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i> : Jaime Puente, Every Texan; Chloe Latham Sikes, Intercultural Development Research Association; Alejandro Pena, Texas American Federation of Teachers; Elaina Fowler, Carrie Griffith, Texas State Teachers' Association) On — (<i>Registered, but did not testify</i> : Eric Marin, Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency)
BACKGROUND:	Some have suggested that alternative education programs should be made available for students at risk of dropping out of school to address limits on the types of programs currently available.
DIGEST:	SB 1647 would revise provisions related to programs available for students at risk of dropping out of school. The bill would allow open-enrollment charter schools, in addition to school districts, to use a dropout recovery education program and would allow a school district or charter school to use an education management organization to provide alternative education programs for students at risk of dropping out. A dropout recovery education program: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• could be operated only by an accredited entity;

- would be required to offer or provide referrals for mental health services to students in the program; and
- could not market directly to students enrolled in a traditional education program.

A school district or charter school could operate one campus-based dropout recovery education program for all students in the district or school. A school administrator or school counselor could refer a student to a dropout recovery education program if the administrator or counselor determined that enrollment in the program could prevent the student from dropping out of school.

In addition to current requirements, a remote or hybrid dropout recovery education program would be required to operate an in-person student engagement center at a location suitable for high school students.

Each year, a school district or charter school would be required to post a report on measurable outcomes for each offered dropout recovery education program on its website. The report would have to include the percentage of students enrolled in the program during the preceding school year who attained each of the following outcomes:

- transfer to a traditional education program;
- successful completion of the program;
- dual credit; or
- a credential of value.

The education commissioner would be required to include a student who successfully completed a course offered through, rather than a student in attendance of, a dropout recovery program in the computation of average daily attendance for funding purposes. The attendance rate would be equal to:

- the average attendance rate for students successfully completing a course offered in person under the program; or
- if the district or school did not offer courses in person under the

program, the statewide average attendance rate for students successfully completing a course offered in person under a dropout recovery program.

An entity that operated a dropout recovery education program could administer an assessment instrument on any date selected by the entity that fell within an applicable established testing window.

The bill would apply beginning with the 2023-24 school year.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2023.