

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1034
By: Barrientos
Education
4-14-97
As Filed

DIGEST

Currently, public elementary schools in Texas do not offer foreign language courses other than bilingual education programs for students who speak English as a second language. However, academic studies have shown that children who have studied a foreign language in elementary school achieve higher scores on standardized tests in reading, language arts, and mathematics than those who have not. Studies also show that language acquisition skills are sharpest at an early age. This legislation directs the commissioner of education to conduct a feasibility study regarding the cost of providing students in kindergarten through grade 12 with access to foreign language instruction, in order to better prepare students for the demands of a global economy and to improve academic performance.

PURPOSE

As proposed, S.B. 1034 directs the commissioner of education to conduct a feasibility study regarding the cost of providing students in kindergarten through grade 12 with access to foreign language instruction.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 28.002, Education Code, by adding Subsection (k), to require the commissioner of education (commissioner) to study and prepare a report on the feasibility of requiring that, beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, funding be provided so that one or more courses to learn a language other than English is offered to each student in kindergarten through grade 12. Requires the commissioner to file with the 75th Legislature, during the regular session, a preliminary report that includes an assessment of the approximate annual cost of implementing the requirement and an explanation of the manner in which further study of the feasibility of the requirement will be done. Requires the commissioner, not later than December 1, 1998, to file with the legislature a final report on the feasibility of the requirement that includes an assessment of the approximate annual cost of implementing the requirement. Provides that this subsection expires January 1, 1999.

SECTION 2. Emergency clause.
Effective date: upon passage.