

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
77R5531 BDH-D

S.B. 852
By: Harris
Education
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DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, Texas is facing an extreme teacher shortage. Over 40,000 teaching positions went unfilled in the 1998-1999 school year, the last year for which statistics are available. In addition, teachers are leaving the profession in large numbers. As proposed, S.B. 852 provides for teacher mentoring programs, alternative certification of teachers, and parental notification of the teaching qualifications of a district's teachers.

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 Chapter 21A, Education Code, by adding Section 21.005, as follows:

Sec. 21.005. TEACHER MENTOR AND INDUCTION PROGRAMS. Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner), to the extent funds are available, to make grants to school districts of \$3,000 for each new teacher employed by the district who holds a certificate under Section 21.049 or a permit under Section 21.055; and \$1,000 for each new teacher employed by the district who holds a certificate under Section 21.044 or 21.052.

(b) Requires a school district to use money received under Subsection (a) only to support one or more of certain programs in the district.

SECTION 2. Amends Chapter 21B, Education Code, by adding Section 21.0491, as follows:

Sec. 21.0491. ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION OF PERSON HOLDING BACHELOR'S DEGREE. (a) Authorizes the State Board for Educator Certification to issue a teaching certificate to a person who meets certain requirements, in addition to issuing teaching certificates to person to whom Section 21.050 applies.

(b) Authorizes a person who holds a bachelor's degree with an academic major related to only one area of the curriculum prescribed under Chapter 28A to receive a certificate to teach only in that subject area.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 21.057, Education Code, to require a school district to provide notice to parents of students regarding the qualifications of district teachers not less than once each school year. Requires the Texas Education Agency (agency) to develop guidelines regarding the notice to be provided, and requires each school district to determine the format and manner of distribution of the notice. Requires the notice provided for each teacher to identify certain information. Deletes language regarding a school district that assigns an inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher to the same classroom for more than 30 consecutive days. Deletes definition of "inappropriately certified or uncertified teacher."

SECTION 4. Amends Chapter 21I, Education Code, by adding Section 21.411, as follows:

Sec. 21.411. BONUSES FOR SERVICE AT LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOL CAMPUS.

(a) Entitles a teacher or principal who is identified by the commissioner as an experienced, extraordinary educator and who agrees to serve for three years at a school campus that is identified as low-performing by the commissioner to a bonus of \$3,000, as provided by this section and to the extent that funds are available.

(b) Requires the commissioner to adopt criteria for identifying experienced, extraordinary educators under this section. Requires the criteria to include certain information.

(c) Requires a bonus under this section to be paid at the beginning of the first year in which the educator serves at the low-performing campus.

(d) Requires an educator who does not serve at the low-performing campus during the entire period for which a bonus under this section was awarded to forfeit the bonus and repay the bonus, in accordance with rules adopted by the commissioner.

(e) Requires the board to impose sanctions on an educator who receives a bonus under this section but does not serve at the low-performing campus during the entire period for which the bonus was awarded.

(f) Authorizes the commissioner and the board to waive the provisions of Subsections (d) and (e) for good cause.

(g) Requires the commissioner to pay any bonuses under this section from funds appropriated for that purpose.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 22.051(a), Education Code, to provide that this subsection also applies to a professional employee of a school district who provides personnel information on a current or former employee of the school district to another school or district.

SECTION 6. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2001-2002 school year.

SECTION 7. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2001.

Provides that SECTIONS 1 and 4 of this Act take effect September 1, 2001.