

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

C.S.S.B. 1348
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Higher Education
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Traditionally, State Board of Education (SBOE) members have relied on a process that adopts the recommendations of writing teams in proposing curriculum standards. These writing teams were primarily composed of classroom teachers, subject-area scholars, and other curriculum writers.

However, SBOE has recently increased reliance on its own expertise in creating curriculum standards and rejected the recommendations of recruited experts. Texas has a stake in making sure high schools prepare their students for college-level work. Critical to their success are factual, research-based and aligned curriculum standards. Respected educators and scholars in the state's world-class institutions of higher education can help ensure that Texas's schoolchildren are prepared to compete in a 21st century workforce.

C.S.S.B. 1348 amends current law relating to higher education curriculum review teams to review public school curriculum standards for college readiness purposes.

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 Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, by adding Section 28.0024, as follows:

Sec. 28.0024. HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM REVIEW TEAMS. (a) Requires the commissioner of higher education (commissioner), for each subject undergoing a review for the purpose of identifying and adopting the essential knowledge and skills of a subject of the required curriculum under Section 28.002 (Required Curriculum), to appoint a higher education curriculum review team to review and make recommendations to the State Board of Education (SBOE) concerning the essential knowledge and skills to ensure that proposed essential knowledge and skills:

- (1) are factually accurate and aligned with contemporary scholarship;
- (2) serve to prepare students for college; and
- (3) serve appropriate instructional purposes.

(b) Requires each higher education curriculum review team to consist of not fewer than five and not more than 10 faculty members of institutions of higher education or private or independent institutions of higher education, as defined by Section 61.003 (Definitions). Requires each member appointed to a team to have:

- (1) at least five years of higher education teaching experience in the subject under review and a terminal degree in that subject; or

(2) at least five years of higher education teaching experience in the field of education and a doctoral degree in education.

(c) Authorizes a public institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education, for each higher education curriculum review team, to nominate one faculty member qualified under Subsection (b). Requires a nomination made under this subsection to be submitted to the commissioner together with a document of not more than one page detailing the faculty member's experience, including specific experience with the subject under review by the team.

(d) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), in collaboration with the commissioner of education, to develop and post on THECB's Internet website a blind scoring system, including the criteria on which the scoring is based, for ranking nominations made under Subsection (c) by level of expertise in the subject under review by each higher education curriculum review team.

(e) Requires the commissioner, based on the system developed under Subsection (d), to make the appointments to each higher education curriculum review team from among persons nominated by institutions of higher education or private or independent institutions of higher education under this section.

(f) Requires at least one member of the team, notwithstanding Subsections (c) and (e), if the subject under review by a higher education curriculum review team is career and technical education, to be selected from each of the following institutions:

(1) Texas State Technical College System; and

(2) Lamar Institute of Technology.

(g) Requires the commissioner, in selecting appointees for a higher education curriculum review team, to attempt to achieve a balanced combination of educational perspectives.

(h) Requires each higher education curriculum review team to, before final identification and adoption of the essential knowledge and skills by SBOE, make recommendations to SBOE concerning the essential knowledge and skills.

(i) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to post on TEA's Internet website the recommendations of each higher education curriculum review team.

(j) Requires the commissioner to coordinate with the SBOE as necessary for the administration of this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.