

BILL ANALYSIS

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S.B. 1383
By: Shapiro, Patrick
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Principals are the school leaders who ensure that each campus has a positive learning environment and ensure that teachers continuously improve classroom performance. Unfortunately, principals are often forgotten in the cycle of continuous improvement and must be provided better feedback and support.

Principals have an impact on the success of their teachers and students. The State of Texas has continuously raised expectations for teachers but has not done the same for principals. S.B. 1383 addresses that need and begins the process for improving and fostering effective school leadership.

S.B. 1383 develops leadership standards that will serve as a foundation for principals training, evaluation, and professional development; designs a principal appraisal and professional development system based on these leadership standards; commissions a study, in collaboration with national experts, on the current leadership structures and areas in need of improvement regarding principal quality in Texas; and requires the Texas Education Agency to report to the 83rd Legislature policy recommendations based on the principal quality study.

As proposed, S.B. 1383 amends current law relating to an appraisal and professional development system for public school principals.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 3 (Section 21.3541, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Section 21.354, Education Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 21.354. APPRAISAL OF CERTAIN ADMINISTRATORS.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 21.354, Education Code, by adding Subsection (a-1) to provide that this section does not apply to the appraisal of the performance of a principal.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter H, Chapter 21, Education Code, by adding Section 21.3541, as follows:

Sec. 21.3541. APPRAISAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM FOR PRINCIPALS. (a) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner) by rule to establish and administer a comprehensive appraisal and professional development system for principals.

(b) Authorizes the commissioner to establish a consortium of nationally recognized experts on educational leadership and policy to:

(1) assist the commissioner in effectively researching and developing the comprehensive appraisal and professional development system described by Subsection (a); and

(2) evaluate relevant research and practices and make recommendations to the commissioner to improve the quality of the training, appraisal, professional development, and compensation of principals.

(c) Requires the commissioner, if the commissioner establishes the consortium, to select a presiding officer of the consortium. Provides that the presiding officer:

(1) is required to be an expert on educational leadership and policy;

(2) is required to have a demonstrated ability to lead a statewide school leadership reform initiative; and

(3) is prohibited from being employed by a school district in this state.

(d) Requires the commissioner to establish school leadership standards and a set of indicators of successful school leadership to align with the training, appraisal, and professional development of principals.

(e) Requires the commissioner, in carrying out the commissioner's powers and duties under this section, to use available money from federal, private, and any other sources that may be used for that purpose.

(f) Requires each school district, in appraising principals, to use either:

(1) the appraisal system and school leadership standards and indicators developed or established by the commissioner under this section; or

(2) an appraisal process and performance criteria similar to the commissioner's appraisal system, standards, and indicators:

(A) developed by the district in consultation with the district- and campus-level committees established under Section 11.251 (Planning and Decision-Making Process); and

(B) adopted by the board of trustees.

(g) Requires each school district to appraise each principal annually.

(h) Requires the commissioner, not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year, to submit a written report to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and presiding officer of each standing legislative committee with primary jurisdiction over public education of:

(1) any action taken under this section during the preceding two years; and

(2) any recommendations for legislative action concerning the training, appraisal, professional development, or compensation of principals.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 21.451, Education Code, by amending Subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) and adding Subsection (a-1), as follows:

(a) Requires that the staff development provided by a school district to an educator other than a principal be:

(1) conducted in accordance with standards developed by the district; and

(2) designed to improve education in the district.

(a-1) Provides that Section 21.3541 (Appraisal of Administrators) and rules adopted under that section govern the professional development provided to a principal.

(b) Requires that the staff development described by Subsection (a) be predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives established under Section 11.253 (Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making), and developed and approved by the campus-level committee established under Section 11.251.

(c) Authorizes a school district, for staff development under Subsection (a), to use district-wide staff development developed and approved through the district-level decision process under Section 11.251.

(d) Provides that the staff development:

(1) is authorized to include training in:

(A) technology;

(B) conflict resolution; and

(C) discipline strategies, including classroom management, district discipline policies, and the student code of conduct adopted under Section 37.001 and Chapter 37; and

(2) is required, subject to Subsection (e) and to Section 21.3541 and rules adopted under that section, to include training based on scientifically based research, as defined by Section 9101, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. Section 7801), that:

(A) relates to instruction of students with disabilities; and

(B) is designed for educators who work primarily outside the area of special education.

SECTION 5. Repealer: Section 21.354(e) (relating to requiring an appraisal of a principal to include consideration of the performance of a principal's campus on the student achievement indicators), Education Code.

SECTION 6. Requires that public school principals, notwithstanding Sections 21.354 and 21.451, Education Code, as amended by this Act, until an appraisal and professional development system for principals under Section 21.3541, Education Code, as added by this Act, is implemented, be appraised under Section 21.354, Education Code, as that section existed before amendment by this Act, and provides that the staff development of principals is governed by Section 21.451, Education Code, as that section existed before amendment by this Act.

SECTION 7. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2011.