

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 1054
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Higher Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of this legislation is to ensure entering college students are given the necessary tools and resources for success. The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment allows institutions of higher education to appropriately place students in classes that match their skills set. Students who are college ready are able to begin entry level course work, while students who need more development are placed in remediation classes to help them gain the necessary skills for success. Unfortunately, some students' performance on the TSI is significantly below the college ready benchmark, and the three categories (college ready, developmental education, and adult basic education) used to classify students' skills do not accurately describe the skills of these low-performing students.

H.B. 1054 amends Section 51.3062 (Success Initiative), Education Code, to add a "Basic Academic Skills" (BASE) level to the remediation definitions of the TSI assessment statute. This would help universities determine what remediation courses are best for students.

H.B. 1054 amends current law relating to developmental education programs under the Texas Success Initiative for public institutions of higher education.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 51.3062, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 51.3062, Education Code, by amending Subsections (a-1), (i), (i-4), (l), (t), and (t-1) and adding Subsection (f-1), as follows:

(a-1) Defines "basic academic skills education" in this section. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

(f-1) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), for each assessment instrument designated by THECB for use under this section, to prescribe a score below which a student is eligible for basic academic skills education.

(i) Authorizes the institution of higher education to refer a student to developmental coursework, including basic academic skills education, as considered necessary by the institution to address a student's deficiencies in the student's readiness to perform freshman-level academic coursework, except that the institution may not require enrollment in developmental coursework with respect to a student previously determined under Subsection (q-1) (providing that a student who has demonstrated the performance standard for college readiness as provided by Section 28.008 on the postsecondary readiness assessment instruments adopted under Section 39.0238 for Algebra II and English III is exempt from the requirements of this section with respect to those content areas) or determined by any institution of higher education to have met college-readiness standards. Makes no further change to this section.

(i-4) Requires THECB, in consultation with institutions of higher education, to develop and provide professional development programs, including instruction in differentiated instruction methods designed to address students' diverse learning needs, to faculty and staff who provide developmental coursework, including basic academic skills education, to students.

(l) Requires the legislature to appropriate money for approved non-degree-credit developmental courses, including basic academic skills education, except that legislative appropriations may not be used for developmental coursework taken by a student in excess of:

(1) 18 semester credit hours, for a general academic teaching institution; and

(2) 27 semester credit hours, for a public junior college, public technical institute, or public state college.

(t) Requires THECB, to allow a student to complete any necessary developmental coursework in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, to encourage institutions of higher education to offer various types of developmental coursework that address various levels of deficiency in readiness to perform college coursework for which course credit may be earned, as determined on the basis of assessments as described by Subsection (f) (requiring that each assessment instrument designated by the board for use under this section be diagnostic in nature and designed to assess a student's readiness to perform freshman-level academic coursework). Authorizes the types of developmental coursework to include certain programs, including basic academic skills education, if applicable to the student.

(t-1) Authorizes THECB to adopt rules as necessary to implement this section, rather than Subsection (t).

SECTION 2. Provides that the change in law made by this Act applies beginning with the 2016-2017 academic year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.