

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1896
By: Taylor, Larry
Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Under current state law, high school students are required to take up to five end-of-course (EOC) exams and meet a Satisfactory Academic Performance (Level II) to graduate from high school. Consequently, student performance on EOC exams is a critical component of the state's public school accountability system. Providing additional opportunities through the Texas Virtual School Network (TxVSN) for students to prepare for EOC assessments could help improve graduation rates and schools' accountability ratings, both of which are essential to elevating the Texas public education system.

S.B. 1896 requires the Texas Education Agency to establish interactive electronic tutorials that provide a comprehensive review for each end-of-course exam mandated by state law. The tutorials must be made available to public school students through TxVSN. The tutorials must be available for the 2016-2017 school year and they must be free of charge to Texas public school students.

As proposed, S.B. 1896 amends current law relating to providing public school students tutorials through the state virtual school network for end-of-course assessment instruments required for graduation.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 29.0845, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Section 29.0845, as follows:

Sec. 29.0845. ONLINE TUTORIALS FOR END-OF-COURSE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT PREPARATION. (a) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop or contract for the development of interactive electronic tutorials that provide a comprehensive review for each end-of-course assessment instrument listed in Section 39.023(c) (requiring TEA to also adopt end-of-course assessment instruments for secondary-level courses in certain subjects).

(b) Requires TEA, from funds appropriated for purposes of this section, to make the tutorials developed under Subsection (a) available to public school students through the state virtual school network under Chapter 30A (State Virtual School Network).

(b-1) Requires TEA to provide the tutorials developed under Subsection (a) through the state virtual school network not later than the 2016-2017 school year. Provides that this subsection expires September 1, 2017.

(c) Prohibits a public school student from being charged a fee for access to a tutorial provided through the state virtual school network under this section or materials used in conjunction with a tutorial.

(d) Requires the commissioner of education to adopt rules as necessary to administer this section.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.