

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 825
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Education
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Ten years ago, the legislature passed the College Preparation Assessments law to support the state's college-readiness agenda by requiring school districts to assess all eighth and 10th graders with a valid, reliable, and nationally normed-referenced college readiness assessment subject to state funding. The program was funded in 2009-2010 and the number of students taking college readiness assessments expanded significantly.

Counselors use the diagnostic information provided by these assessments to help eighth grade students make informed decisions related to their H.B. 5 endorsement selections as well as identify 10th graders for advanced coursework. Today's college-readiness assessments have also evolved to connect students to many more opportunities to support their college and career ambitions including:

- In addition to the National Merit Scholarship Program, students now have access to an expanded the pool of available scholarships;
- Free student access to the Khan Academy's personalized SAT study practice plan; and
- New interactive college and career exploration resources that help students identify potential majors and select relevant courses in high school and college as well as new scholarship qualifications.

S.B. 825 purpose: Current law requires school districts to administer these assessments to eighth and 10th graders if the state funds the assessments. S.B. 825 simply makes the law permissive so that school districts have the option to offer these assessments if the program's funding is restored.

S.B. 825 aligns with the H.B. 5 changes enacted in 2013 to address parents' over-testing concerns by making the program subject to local determination if funding for college readiness assessments is appropriated by this or a future legislature. Since this law is contingent on state funding, there is no fiscal note. S.B. 825 also supports the recommendations of the Next Generation Assessment & Accountability Commission to support broader administration of college-readiness tests

S.B. 825 amends current law relating to school district discretion to administer college preparation assessment instruments to public school students at state cost.

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 Section 39.0261(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that in addition to the assessment instruments otherwise authorized or required by this subchapter (Assessment of Academic Skills), a school district is authorized, rather than is required, to:

(1) each school year and at state cost, administer to students in the spring of eighth grade a certain college preparation assessment instrument for the purpose of diagnosing the academic strengths and deficiencies of students before entrance into high school;

(2) each school year and at state cost, administer to students in the 10th grade a college preparation assessment instrument with certain criteria for the purpose of measuring a student's progress toward readiness for college and the workplace; and

(3) makes no changes to this subdivision.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.