

By: Dutton

H.B. No. 1518

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to accountability for public school dropouts and students at risk of dropping out of school.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 29.081(c), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(c) Each school district shall evaluate and document the effectiveness of the accelerated instruction in reducing any disparity in performance on assessment instruments administered under Subchapter B, Chapter 39, or disparity in the rates of high school completion between students at risk of dropping out of school and all other district students. The evaluation shall include an analysis of the effectiveness of each program described in the campus and district improvement plans for reducing the disparities described by this subsection. The commissioner shall ensure that each school district complies with this subsection.

SECTION 2. Subchapter C, Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 29.088 to read as follows:

Sec. 29.088. DROPOUT DATA OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE. (a) The dropout data oversight committee shall review the agency's standards and definitions for dropouts and students completing school before the agency implements the standards and definitions. The committee shall be composed of:

(1) one member appointed by the governor;

1           (2) one member appointed by the speaker of the house;  
2           (3) one member appointed by the lieutenant governor;  
3           (4) one member of the Legislative Budget Board,  
4 appointed jointly by the lieutenant governor and the speaker of the  
5 house; and

6           (5) one employee of the office of the state auditor,  
7 appointed by the state auditor.

8           (b) A committee member appointed by the governor,  
9 lieutenant governor, or speaker of the house shall represent the  
10 public and must have a demonstrated interest in dropout prevention  
11 and public education.

12           (c) The committee is subject to Chapter 2110, Government  
13 Code.

14           SECTION 3. Sections 42.152(d) and (r), Education Code, are  
15 amended to read as follows:

16           (d) The agency shall systematically evaluate the  
17 effectiveness of accelerated instruction and support programs  
18 provided under Section 29.081 for students at risk of dropping out  
19 of school. The agency shall organize and share the information it  
20 collects during its evaluation with local districts. If the agency  
21 cannot perform this evaluation with existing resources, the  
22 commissioner shall:

23           (1) withhold from the total amount appropriated for  
24 allotments under this section an amount the commissioner determines  
25 is necessary to perform the evaluation; and

26           (2) reduce each district's tier one allotments in the  
27 manner described for a reduction in allotments under Section

1 42.253.

2 (r) The commissioner shall adopt rules under which the  
3 commissioner must grant a one-year exemption from the requirements  
4 of Subsection (q) ~~[(g)]~~ to a school district that consistently  
5 achieves significant reductions in the disparity in performance  
6 between students described by Section 29.081(d) and all other  
7 students. The commissioner may not grant an exemption to a district  
8 that does not make consistent significant progress in reducing its  
9 dropout rate ~~[in which the group of students who have failed to~~  
10 ~~perform satisfactorily in the preceding school year on an~~  
11 ~~assessment instrument required under Section 39.023(a), (c), or (l)~~  
12 ~~subsequently performs on those assessment instruments at a level~~  
13 ~~that meets or exceeds a level prescribed by commissioner rule]~~.  
14 Each year the commissioner, based on the most recent information  
15 available, shall determine if a school district is entitled to an  
16 exemption for the following school year and notify the district and  
17 the district's board of trustees of that determination.

18 SECTION 4. (a) This Act takes effect beginning with the  
19 2003-2004 school year.

20 (b) As soon as practicable on or after the effective date of  
21 this Act, as provided by Section 29.088, Education Code, as added by  
22 this Act:

23 (1) the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of  
24 the house shall each appoint a person to the dropout data oversight  
25 committee;

26 (2) the lieutenant governor and the speaker of the  
27 house shall appoint a member of the Legislative Budget Board to the

1 dropout data oversight committee; and

2 (3) the state auditor shall appoint an employee of the  
3 office of the state auditor to the dropout data oversight  
4 committee.

5 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
6 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
7 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
8 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
9 Act takes effect September 1, 2003.