

Highlights of Conference Committee Report on House Bill 3

by Representative Rob Eissler and Senator Florence Shapiro

Postsecondary Readiness

- For the first time, Texas will use college readiness as an element of the accountability system by requiring districts and campuses to increase the number of students performing at the college readiness level.
- Establishes a college readiness standard on the English III and Algebra II end-of-course exams and guarantees students who meet this standard are placed in credit bearing courses in higher education for that subject.

Rigor and Relevance

- Strong academic core for students on the recommended plan with increased flexibility (6 electives). Recommended plan: students must earn four credits in each of the four core subject areas (4x4), two credits of the same foreign language, one physical education credit, one fine arts credit and six electives selected by students and parents.
- Maintains high standards for students by requiring them to demonstrate knowledge on the end-of-course exams in each content area to graduate. Students must earn a cumulative score on assessments in each core area (model from SB 1031 in the 80th Session).
- Requires third grade students to be promoted based on a variety of factors, but maintains the current promotion requirements for grades 5 and 8. Allows the commissioner to intervene if schools inappropriately promote students.
- Authorizes districts to provide math and science courses in an applied manner, while ensuring quality by requiring TEKS coverage and end-of-course exams.

Campus and District Recognition

- Provides for districts and campuses to earn recognized and exemplary designations for higher percentages of students meeting postsecondary readiness standards.
- Allows campuses to earn distinctions for outstanding academic achievement in the core subject areas, growth in student achievement, closing the gaps, fine arts, physical education, 21st Century Workforce Development and second language learning
- Requires distinctions to be awarded using multiple measures of success.

Accountability Indicators

- Allows student growth to count toward meeting the passing and college-readiness standards
- Allows districts to meet the standard or use a 3-year rolling average.
- Provides districts a safety valve in meeting accountability indicators so long as the exceptions to meeting the standard are atypical and not persistent.

Interventions and Sanctions

- Grants campuses an additional year after reconstitution to meet accreditation standards.
- Provides the option of repurposing in lieu of closure.
- Allows the delay of alternative management, repurposing and closure by one year if the commissioner determines that the campus is making significant progress toward accreditation.
- Prohibits the commissioner from requiring the name of a campus to be changed.