

SB 149, Seliger (Graduation Committees)

Caption: Relating to the creation of individual graduation committees for certain high school students.

Summary as Passed by House and Senate:

Who is affected: The bill requires school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to convene individual graduation committees (IGCs), for 11th and 12th grade students who have failed to pass *no more than two* of the five required end-of-course (EOC) tests, at or after the end of the students' 11th grade year. To be eligible to graduate and receive a diploma via the IGC, a student must successfully complete either the curriculum requirements for the FHSP under State Board of Education rules, or the curriculum requirements under the commissioner's transition plan rules. However, scores of "proficient" on a "corresponding" TSI assessment can satisfy the Algebra I or English II EOC test requirements — which would bypass the need to convene an IGC.

Requirements specific to IGC composition: IGCs are to include: the principal or designee; for *each* EOC test failed, the teacher of the relevant course(s); the department chair or lead teacher supervising the teacher(s) of the relevant course(s); and *either* the student's parent/guardian, a designated advocate if the parent/guardian is unable to attend, or the student, at his/her option, if the student is at least 18 years of age or is an emancipated minor. By the 2015-16 school year, the commissioner must adopt rules to implement the bill, including rules that establish a procedure for appointing alternate committee members if a person is unable to serve and to appoint a designated advocate.

Procedural requirements: District superintendents are required to establish procedures for convening the IGCs and, for SY 2014-15 only, the procedures for appointing alternative committee members. Districts also must establish time lines for the IGC process in SY 2014-15 (after that, commissioner rules will dictate the time lines). If the parent/guardian/advocate/ participating student is unable to speak English, the district shall provide an appropriate translator, if one is available. Districts are required to make a good faith effort to notify the parent/guardian of the IGC meeting. Notice must be provided in person, by mail or by e-mail; be clear and easy to understand; and be written in English, Spanish, or to the extent practicable, in the individual's native language.

Additional academic requirements: IGCs must recommend additional requirements for each failed EOC test for a student to be eligible to graduate. These include additional remediation and either completion of a project that demonstrates proficiency in the subject area of each course where the EOC test was failed, or preparation of a portfolio of work samples from each affected course that demonstrates proficiency in the subject area(s). Students may submit coursework that was previously completed to satisfy recommended additional requirements.

Required committee considerations: IGCs must consider the following in determining whether a student is qualified to graduate:

- ✧ Recommendations of the teachers in each course where an EOC test was failed
- ✧ Grades in each of the courses where an EOC test was failed
- ✧ Scores on the relevant failed EOC tests
- ✧ Student performance on the additional academic requirements
- ✧ Hours of remediation attended, including college preparatory courses *under Chapter 39.025(b-2)* [emphasis added because these are the courses NOT implemented to date]
- ✧ Attendance and successful completion of transitional college courses in reading or mathematics
- ✧ School attendance rate
- ✧ Satisfaction of any of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) college readiness benchmarks set by THECB (SAT, ACT, or TSIA cut scores)
- ✧ Successful completion of a dual credit course in one of the four core subject areas
- ✧ Successful completion of a Pre-AP, AP, or IB program course in one of the four core subject areas
- ✧ An “Advanced High” rating on the most recent high school administration of TELPAS
- ✧ A score of 50 or better on a CLEP test
- ✧ Scores on ACT, SAT, or ASVAB tests
- ✧ Completion of a sequence of CTE program courses required to attain an industry-recognized credential or certificate
- ✧ Overall preparedness for postsecondary success
- ✧ *Any other academic information that the local school board requires IGCs to consider*

Retest and reporting requirements: Students must retake the relevant EOC tests until they graduate. Districts will be held accountable for retest results in keeping with state accountability system requirements. By Dec. 1 each year, districts must report in PEIMS the number of students for whom IGCs are convened, and of those, the number graduated by the IGC each year.

Committee determination of eligibility to graduate: IGCs can authorize eligible students to graduate based on the above considerations and additional requirements if 1) the committee decision is unanimous and 2) the student has passed all curriculum requirements for graduation per SBOE or commissioner transition rule. *Students cannot graduate via the IGC before their 12th grade year.*

Expiration dates: Provisions related to IGCs, and to TSI as a substitution for either Algebra I or English II EOC test graduation requirements, will expire on September 1, 2017. The district data reporting requirements expire on September 1, 2018.

Effective date: Effective immediately because of two-thirds votes in Senate and House, assuming the governor either signs the bill into law or allows it to come into effect with no action.