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Bill Analysis

Legislative Service Commission

H.B. 74

123rd General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Barnes, Allen, Patton, Smith, Boyd, Pringle, Barrett, DePiero, Verich

BILL SUMMARY

- Requires all students in "academic emergency" school districts to complete one unit of personal responsibility instruction in each of grades nine through twelve.
- Requires all school districts to integrate personal responsibility instruction into the high school curriculum.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

High school curriculum

(sec. 3313.603)

Current law authorizes each school district to develop its own curriculum, but certain subjects must be part of that curriculum (sec. 3313.60(A), not in the bill). In addition, the law codifies specific requirements for a district's high school curriculum. Under these requirements, a student must complete 21 units of instruction in grades nine through twelve to graduate from high school. A unit equals 120 hours of instruction, except for a laboratory course in which a unit equals 150 hours of instruction. A half-unit equals 60 hours of instruction, except for a physical education course in which a half-unit equals 120 hours of instruction. The 21 units required for graduation must be distributed in the following manner: English (4 units); health (1/2 unit); mathematics (3 units); physical education (1/2 unit); science (2 units, 3 units after September 15, 2003); social studies (3 units); American history (1/2 unit); American government (1/2 unit); and electives (8 units, 7 units after September 15, 2003). Of the required elective units, a student must choose at least one unit or two half-units from among the areas of business/technology, fine arts, and foreign language. (Sec. 3313.603(A) to (B).) The bill requires that school districts include

instruction in personal responsibility within this framework (see below under "*Academic emergency districts*" and "*All other districts*").

Personal responsibility instruction

(secs. 3313.6012 and 3313.6013)

The bill defines personal responsibility instruction as instruction designed to develop in students the values and behaviors that enable them to succeed in post-secondary education or employment. Such instruction must include at least three broad concepts: the importance of personal hygiene and dressing and presenting oneself attractively, financial responsibility, and workplace responsibility. Instruction in workplace responsibility includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) Understanding how an employee's behavior affects other employees and how supporting an employer's goals benefits employees;
- (2) The rationale for workplace rules;
- (3) The value of cooperation in the workplace;
- (4) The importance of loyalty to one's employer; and
- (5) The importance of taking responsibility for mistakes and errors and taking necessary steps to correct them. (Sec. 3313.6012.)

Academic emergency districts

Current law, unchanged by the bill, prescribes eighteen performance standards expected for all school districts (sec. 3302.02, not in the bill). Beginning July 1, 1999, the Department of Education is required to calculate each district's performance every three years. The Department is required to declare any district that meets at least 94 per cent of the expected standards to be an "effective school district." The Department also must declare any district that does not meet more than 33% of the expected standards to be in a state of "academic emergency." (Sec. 3302.03, not in the bill.) Preliminary data from the Department indicates that 58 out of the state's 611 school districts are presently in a state of "academic emergency."

The bill provides that in the year after a district is declared to be in "academic emergency" the district must require all students in grades nine through twelve to complete one unit of personal responsibility instruction each year until the district is declared to be an "effective school district." The one unit of personal

responsibility instruction is to be in lieu of one elective. Thus, under the bill a student in an "academic emergency" district would need a total of four units of personal responsibility instruction to graduate. (Sec. 3313.6013(A).)

All other districts

The bill requires any other district (not in a state of academic emergency) to integrate personal responsibility instruction throughout the regular high school curriculum. The bill suggests that this instruction may be integrated into such subjects as health, social studies, and economics. It does not specify how much personal responsibility instruction a district must offer nor how much of this instruction any student must complete. (Sec. 3313.6013(B).)

HISTORY

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