

HB 897 -- High-Risk or Alternative Charter Schools

Sponsor: Jones (63)

This bill changes the laws regarding high-risk or alternative charter schools. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Allows a high-risk or alternative charter school to establish alternative ways for students to obtain credit for graduation, such as credit for off-campus instruction, work experience, or embedded instruction. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, after three years, must conduct a study of a school which was granted alternative arrangements to assess student performance, graduation rates, educational outcomes, and entry into the workforce or higher education rates;

(2) Allows a charter school whose mission includes dropout prevention or recovery to admit a nonresident student who is considered high risk or a dropout when the student resides in a residential care facility, a transitional living group home, or an independent living program and whose last school was in the district where the charter school is located and requires these schools to give admission preference to resident students over nonresidents;

(3) Allows a charter school to give admission preference to high-risk students and dropouts; and

(4) Revises the definition of "eligible student" as it relates to the School Flex Program to include a student 17 years of age to 21 years of age who has not obtained a high school diploma and allows a charter school to participate in the program.