House Bill 7: Prohibiting the Use of Testing Scores on Promotion or Retention Decisions

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SCHOOL LAW NEWSLETTER

Introduced on January 18, 2015, House Bill 7 governs how student scores on assessments are used in making placement decisions. The Bill was passed by the Senate and House, and was signed into law by Governor Kasich on March 16, 2015.

The Bill prohibits public schools from using a student's score on any elementary-level state assessment or high school end-of-course examination administered in the 2014-2015 school year when deciding whether to retain or promote the student. The scores cannot be used as a factor in deciding whether to give a student course credit as well.

Third-Grade Reading Guarantee

The bill specifically carves out the third-grade language arts assessment from the prohibition of using assessment scores to make decisions on retaining or promoting students. As such, the third-grade language arts assessment may be used in such decisions.

Release of Individual Scores

Additionally, H.B. 7 prohibits the release of individual student scores on these assessments, except to the student or the student's parents, school, or school district. The bill allows students to retake end-of-course examinations at any time during their academic career, and authorizes students to take the end-of-course exam at a later time if for some reason they could not take the end-of-course exam on the scheduled administration date.

Student Enrollment Calculation

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Ohio's school funding formula is based on student enrollment. Current law prohibits including a student who did not take the previous year's elementary or high school achievement assessment unless the student was specifically excused as a special education or limited English proficient student. The bill provides that the prohibition against including students does not apply to a student who did not take these tests during the 2014-2015 school year.

What You Need To Know

School Districts should make sure that student scores on assessment tests and end-of-course examinations are not used as a factor in retention or promotion decisions, or when deciding whether to give course credit.

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