

89th Legislative Update

Senate Bill (SB) 401 Homeschool Participation in UIL Activities

The UIL (University Interscholastic League) has historically opposed legislation like SB 401, which allows homeschool students to participate in UIL activities, due to several key concerns. Here are the primary reasons for UIL's opposition:

by Derick Roberson



UIL as an Arm of Public Education

Historical Purpose

UIL was created to enhance academic, athletic, and artistic opportunities for Texas public school students.




Policy Shift

SB 401 expands UIL eligibility to non-enrolled students, marking a notable shift in UIL's historical connection to public education.

Participation Disconnect

Homeschool students participating without enrollment may blur lines between public and private educational systems.



REGULATIONS

Key Considerations

1)

Eligibility Monitoring

Public school students are subject to six-week academic eligibility checks (“No Pass, No Play”). Homeschool students are monitored by their parent-educator, with less formal oversight.

2)

Flexible Scheduling

Homeschool students may benefit from more flexible schedules, potentially increasing availability for practice and recovery.

3)

Competitive Advantage

This increased flexibility can unintentionally provide homeschool students with a competitive advantage over traditional public school participants

4)

District Oversight

Districts will be responsible for verifying academic standing, residency, and discipline compliance for non-enrolled participants.

Operational and Compliance Responsibilities



Eligibility Documentation

Schools must collect and validate homeschool students' grade equivalency and attendance documents to ensure UIL compliance.



Disciplinary Standards

Districts must determine how disciplinary infractions are reported and enforced for students not enrolled in district schools.



Residency and Transfer Rules

Homeschool students must meet the same residency rules as enrolled students, but the verification process may require additional steps.

Rational for District Opt-Out



State Approval

SB 401 is now law. UIL must implement and support it, but local districts retain the right to opt out via local board action.



Protecting District Resources

Oversight of non-enrolled students could strain staff time and resources that are intended to support enrolled students.



Equity in Eligibility Monitoring

The district lacks standardized mechanisms to consistently verify homeschool academic performance, which could create inconsistencies.



Preserving Program Integrity

Opting out maintains a consistent system for all student participants and avoids complications tied to outside regulation.

Next Steps



Review SB 401

Review SB 401 and the UIL's adoption of the new law that allows Homeschool students to participate on behalf of Duncanville ISD.



Amend FM (LOCAL)

Amend FM (LOCAL) Student Activities to allow Duncanville ISD to opt out of this new law.



Questions?