

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3220  
By: Allison  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Concerns have been raised regarding the shortage of mental health providers in public school settings. There have been calls to attract more individuals to the field of school psychology by providing education loan repayment assistance to school psychologists. H.B. 3220 seeks to address this issue by making school psychologists eligible for the education loan repayment assistance program for certain mental health professionals.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3220 amends the Education Code to include a licensed specialist in school psychology among the persons defined as a mental health professional for the purposes of repayment of certain mental health professional education loans. The bill makes such a specialist who is employed by a public school district or open-enrollment charter school eligible for loan repayment assistance if the person meets the following criteria:

- applies to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board;
- provides mental health services to students enrolled in a district or charter school; and
- has completed one, two, three, four, or five consecutive years of practice in Texas.

H.B. 3220 establishes that another mental health professional from any eligible category except a licensed marriage and family therapist takes priority over a licensed specialist in school psychology in the distribution of the repayment assistance but that such a specialist has equal priority with such a therapist. The bill limits the total amount of repayment assistance received by such a specialist to \$10,000.

H.B. 3220 repeals Section 61.604(d) and Section 61.608(c), Education Code, as added by Chapter 891 (H.B. 3083), Acts of the 85th Legislature, Regular Session, 2017.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2019.