

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 4124
By: Hinojosa
Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The State Board of Education (SBOE) is authorized to establish a special-purpose school district for the education of students in special situations whose educational needs are not adequately met by traditional school districts. The SBOE has authorized Texas Tech University and The University of Texas at Austin to each establish a special-purpose school district to provide full-time remote and asynchronous instruction to meet nontraditional student needs. The legislature created a funding allotment for special-purpose school districts operated by institutions of higher education and the option of state funding may increase the access of parents and students to these schools if the commissioner of education adopts a funding model to support access to these districts. Over 100,000 military-connected students are enrolled throughout Texas public schools. Military-connected students in active-duty families are unique because they must move every few years as their parents change duty stations. These students must adapt to new curricula and graduation requirements with every move. These special-purpose districts need access to different options to support military-connected students during and through their educational experience. C.S.H.B. 4124 seeks to support military-connected children by authorizing special-purpose districts to prioritize military dependents who do not reside in Texas due to a military deployment or transfer.

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

C.S.H.B. 4124 amends the Education Code to authorize a special-purpose school district that is operated by a general academic teaching institution, in enrolling students or creating a waitlist for student enrollment, to prioritize military-connected students, as defined by reference, and enroll a student who is a dependent of a member of the U.S. military, was previously enrolled in school in Texas, and does not reside in Texas due to a military deployment or transfer.

C.S.H.B. 4124 specifies that a student for which a public school district is entitled to funding under the foundation school program as if the district had no tier-one local share for purposes of statutory provisions establishing the formula for the tier-one share is a dependent of a member of the United States military, was previously enrolled in school in Texas, and does not reside in Texas due to a military deployment or transfer.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2021.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 4124 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute does not include an authorization which was included in the original for a special-purpose school district that is operated by a general academic teaching institution to receive funding for certain students but the substitute does authorize the special-purpose school district to enroll those students and specifies that those students are the students for which a school district is entitled to funding under the foundation school program under certain conditions.