

SUBJECT: Parenting and paternity awareness curriculum used in public high schools

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 6 ayes — Eissler, Hochberg, Allen, Farias, Jackson, Olivo

2 nays — Aycock, Weber

3 absent — Dutton, Patrick, Shelton

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 9 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Monty Exter, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Greg Herzog, Texas Medical Association; Jason Sabo, United Ways of Texas; Jodie Smith, Texans Care for Children)

Against — None

On — Michael Hayes, Attorney General-Child Support Division

BACKGROUND: Education Code, sec. 28.002 requires school districts to incorporate parenting and paternity awareness programs into the health curriculum. In 2007, the State Board of Education adopted the Office of the Attorney General's parenting and paternity awareness curriculum, a 14-lesson plan with lessons of approximately one hour each. High school health classes traditionally are only one semester, providing a truncated timetable over which to cover parenting and paternity awareness and other topics.

DIGEST: SB 1219 would allow teachers, at the discretion of the school district, to modify the suggested sequence and pace of parenting and paternity awareness programs.

The bill would apply beginning with the 2009-2010 school year. This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2009.