

SUBJECT: Providing math training academies to certain public school teachers

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 8 ayes — Aycock, Bohac, Deshotel, Dutton, Farney, Galindo, González, K. King

0 nays

3 absent — Allen, Huberty, VanDeaver

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* David Anderson, Arlington ISD Board of Trustees; Edna Butts, Austin ISD; Julie Cowan, Austin ISD School Board; Lanet Greenhaw, Dallas Regional Chamber; Ashlea Graves, Houston ISD; Howell Wright, Huntsville ISD; Barbara Frandsen, League of Women Voters of Texas; Carol Fletcher, Pflugerville ISD; Ted Melina Raab, Texas American Federation of Teachers; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Amy Beneski, Texas Association of School Administrators; Lindsay Gustafson, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Kyle Ward, Texas PTA; Colby Nichols, Texas Rural Education Association; Portia Bosse, Texas State Teachers Association; Monty Exter, The Association of Texas Professional Educators; Grover Campbell, Texas Association of School Boards; Casey Smith, United Ways of Texas)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency; Steve Swanson)

BACKGROUND: Education Code, sec. 5.001 defines “educationally disadvantaged” to mean students eligible to participate in the national free or reduced-price lunch program.

Some school districts with high percentages of educationally

disadvantaged students report districtwide math scores below the statewide average. Primary teachers early in their career have reported feeling unprepared in providing mathematics instruction to students.

DIGEST:

HB 2609 would amend Education Code, ch. 21, subch. J regarding educator staff development by requiring the commissioner of education, or someone designated by the commissioner, to develop mathematics achievement academies for math teachers of kindergarten, first, second, or third grade students.

A mathematics achievement academy would be required to include training in effective and systematic instructional practices in mathematics, including measurement, problem solving, and analyzing and describing geometric shapes, figures, and patterns.

The commissioner would have to adopt criteria for selecting teachers to attend a mathematics achievement academy and give priority to teachers of school districts in which at least 50 percent of the students enrolled are eligible to participate in the national free or reduced-price lunch program.

The bill would provide teachers attending the academy a stipend amount determined by the commissioner. A stipend would not be considered in determining the minimum monthly salary of the teacher.

On request of the commissioner, regional education service centers would be required to assist the commissioner and Texas Education Agency with training and other activities relating to the development and operation of mathematics achievement academies.

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, 2015.

NOTES:

According to the fiscal note, providing mathematics achievement academies to math teachers of kindergarten, first, second, or third grade students would cost an estimated \$14.3 million in fiscal 2016 due to initial

development costs, \$8.5 million in fiscal 2017, increasing to about \$9 million by fiscal 2020.