

- SUBJECT:** Revising certain qualifications for teachers at certain charter schools
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Bohac, Deshotel, Dutton, Gooden, K. King, Koop, Meyer, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Dale Underwood, Gulf Coast Trades Center, Raven School Charter; Will Gollihar, Thomas Buzbee Vocational High School; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Shannon Meroney, ACT-Dallas; Jon Fisher, Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas; Mike Meroney, Huntsman Corporation, BASF Corporation; Jennifer Rodriguez, Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association of Texas; Courtney Boswell and Houston Tower, Texas Aspires; Fred Shannon, Texas Association of Manufacturers; Michael White, Texas Construction Association; Ellen Arnold, Texas PTA)
- Against — Lindsay Gustafson, Texas Classroom Teachers Association
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Kara Belew, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code, sec. 12.129 requires a person employed as a principal or teacher by an open-enrollment charter school to have a bachelor's degree.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 1469 would amend Education Code, sec. 12.129 to allow individuals who did not hold a bachelor's degree to teach a noncore vocational course at certain open-enrollment charter schools if they had:
- demonstrated subject matter expertise related to the subject taught, including any combination of work experience, training and education, and industry license and certification; and
 - received at least 20 hours of classroom management training, as determined by the governing body of the open-enrollment charter

school.

The bill would apply to open-enrollment charter schools that served youth referred to or placed in a residential trade center by a local or state agency.

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, 2017.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CSHB 1469 would allow skilled professionals without bachelor's degrees to teach vocational courses at Buzbee Vocational High School in Walker County, making it easier for them to bring experienced tradesmen and tradeswomen into the classroom. Administrators often are unable to find and retain teachers to educate students in vocational courses, and this bill would enable them to hire skilled professionals who meet every certification other than a four-year degree.

Skilled professionals could teach in vocational tech classes, regardless of whether they had a bachelor's degree, providing more opportunities for professionals such as construction workers, electricians, plumbers, mechanics, and others to teach in the classroom. Many of the skilled laborers who might teach at Buzbee Vocational High School have more than a decade of experience in their trade and would be able to impart valuable skills to students that could lead to good jobs after graduation. Students at the school are at risk and many are unlikely to get a college degree, making it even more important for them to learn a trade, which this bill would facilitate.

Concerns about this bill leading to lower standards at other open-enrollment charter schools and districts of innovation are unfounded because the committee substitute bracketed the bill to apply only to Buzbee Vocational High School, and instructors who teach core classes still would be required to have a bachelor's degree.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

CSHB 1469 could lower standards for certain charter schools. It also could lower standards for districts of innovation and other charter schools

if the jurisdiction of this bill were ever to expand.

NOTES:

CSHB 1469 differs from the bill as filed in that the committee substitute would apply to an open-enrollment charter school that served youth referred to or placed in a residential trade center by a local or state agency. CSHB 1469 also would specify that a person without a bachelor's degree could be employed as a teacher for a noncore vocational, rather than academic career and technical education, course.