

- SUBJECT:** Continuing a pilot program for assessing students in writing
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 13 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Allison, Ashby, K. Bell, Dutton, M. González, K. King, Meyer, Sanford, Talarico, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — Christi Morgan, Sunnyvale ISD, TASA; Tracy Kriese, Texas Council of Teachers of English Language Arts; Colton Morgan; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Traci Berry, Goodwill Central Texas; Laurie Filipelli, League of Women Voters of Texas; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Grover Campbell, Texas Association of School Boards; Paige Williams, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Suzi Kennon, Texas PTA; Jerod Patterson, Texas Rural Education Association; Dee Carney, Texas School Alliance; Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Texas State Teachers Association)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Hannah LaPorte, IDEA Public Schools; Pablo Barrera, TCSA; Tyson Kane, Eric Marin, Heather Mauze, and Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency; Theresa Trevino, Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment; Heather Smith)
- BACKGROUND:** The 84th Legislature in 2015 enacted HB 1164 by VanDeaver, which established a pilot program to use portfolios to assess students' writing in grades 4 and 7 during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years. Some have said the portfolio method led to stronger student engagement and overall improvements in writing instruction, and that Texas should continue to consider alternative ways to assess writing.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2824 would extend a pilot program to assess fourth grade and

seventh grade students in writing through the 2022-2023 school year.

The commissioner of education would have to establish a committee to assist the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in planning, evaluating, and overseeing the pilot program. The committee would have to provide guidance on:

- the program's timeline and scoring rubric;
- professional development for teachers on the writing assessment method developed; and
- a feedback and reflection process between teachers and students to evaluate the results of writing assessments administered under the pilot program.

The commissioner would be required to appoint to the committee:

- at least three administrators employed by a school district that participated in the program;
- at least three educators, other than administrators, employed by a school district that participated in the program; and
- representatives of regional education service centers, public institutions of higher education, and TEA.

A school district designated to participate in the pilot program could not administer STAAR writing exams to students in grades 4 and 7.

TEA would have to develop methods to determine the validity of the process for scoring student writing exams. By September 1, 2021, and September 1, 2023, the agency would have to prepare and deliver to the governor, lieutenant governor, House speaker, and certain legislative committees' presiding officers a report that evaluated the implementation and progress of the pilot program and made recommendations regarding the continuation or expansion of the pilot program.

The 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, 2019.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of \$3.2 million to general revenue related funds through fiscal 2020-21.