

SUBJECT: Funding child care expenses through compensatory education funds

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 12 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Allison, Ashby, K. Bell, M. González,
K. King, Meyer, Sanford, Talarico, VanDeaver

0 nays

1 absent — Dutton

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*; David Anderson, Arlington ISD Board of Trustees; Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Betsy Singleton, League of Women Voters of Texas; Jill McFarland and Eric Kunish, National Alliance on Mental Illness-Austin; Alissa Sughrue, National Alliance on Mental Illness-Texas; Will Francis, National Association of Social Workers-Texas Chapter; Deborah Caldwell, North East ISD; Bob Popinski, Raise Your Hand Texas; Seth Rau, San Antonio ISD; Josette Saxton, Texans Care for Children; Ted Raab, Texas American Federation of Teachers (Texas AFT); Amanda List, Texas Appleseed; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Dominic Giarratani, Texas Association of School Boards; Amanda Brownson, Texas Association of School Business Officials, Texas Association of School Administrators, Texas Association of School Boards; Jennifer Biundo, Texas Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy; Michael Barba, Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops; Paige Williams, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Kristin McGuire, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA); Kyle Ward, Texas PTA; Jerod Patterson, Texas Rural Education Association; Buck Gilcrease, Texas School Alliance; Christy Rome, Texas School Coalition; Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Texas State Teachers Association; Lee Nichols, TexProtects; Knox Kimberly, Upbring; Columba Wilson)

Against — None

On — Kelly Hickman; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Terri Hanson, David Marx, and Melody Parrish, Texas Education Agency)

BACKGROUND: Education Code sec. 42.152 establishes that compensatory education allotment funds are distributed to school districts based on their student enrollment in the national free or reduced school lunch program. Districts generally must use these funds for instructional purposes including improving student performance on state assessments and enhancing high school completion rates for students who are at risk of dropping out of school.

DIGEST: HB 314 would allow school districts to use compensatory education allotment funds to pay for providing child care services or assisting with child care expenses for students at risk of dropping out of school who were pregnant or were parents.

Districts also could use compensatory education funds to pay for costs associated with the following services provided through a life skills program for at-risk students who were pregnant or were parents:

- counseling and self-help programs;
- day care for the students' children on campus or at a nearby facility;
- transportation for students and their children to and from the campus or day care facility;
- instruction in child development, parenting, and home and family living skills; and
- assistance in obtaining government and community services, including certain health plans.

No later than January 1, 2020, the commissioner of education would be required to adopt rules requiring the Public Education Information System (PEIMS) to include pregnancy as a reason a student withdrew from or otherwise no longer attended school.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

HB 314 would give districts flexibility to use compensatory education funds to provide child-care services and life skills programs as a way to help at-risk students who were pregnant or parents. Difficulties in finding reliable, affordable child care can distract students from their studies, causing them to drop out.

Texas used to have a grant program that districts could use to provide child care, but funding for that program ended. The bill would be in line with HB 3 by Huberty, the House-passed school finance bill, which would remove some restrictions on the use of compensatory education funding.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

HB 314 would inappropriately allow school districts to divert compensatory education funds to pay for child care expenses. Compensatory education funds were designed to provide additional instruction for students who are struggling academically and should not be used for other purposes. Districts that want to provide those services should use other funds.