

SUBJECT: Allowing STAAR exams to be administered over multiple days

COMMITTEE: Public Education — committee substitute recommended

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

0 nays

1 absent — Ashby

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*; Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Jacquie Benestante, Autism Society of Texas; Chris Masey, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Brenda Koegler, League of Women Voters of Texas; Sheri Hicks, Heather Sheffield, and Theresa Trevino, Texans Advocating for Meaningful Student Assessment; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Grover Campbell, Texas Association of School Boards; Lonnie Hollingsworth, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Linda Litzinger, Texas Parent to Parent; Dee Carney, Texas School Alliance; Kristine Garaña; Melisa Markman; Keith O'Brien; Angela Valenzuela)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Bill Kelberlau; Ronda McCauley)

On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Eric Marin and Monica Martinez, Texas Education Association)

BACKGROUND: Education Code sec. 39.023 requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to adopt and develop appropriate instruments to assess essential knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies, and science. The current testing program is known as the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, or STAAR.

Each STAAR exam must be given on only one day, and exams must be designed so that 85 percent of students in grades 3 through 5 would be able to complete an exam within 120 minutes and 85 percent of students in grades 6 through 8 would be able to complete an exam within 180 minutes.

Concerns have been raised that administering a STAAR test in one day can put strain on school schedules and increase pressure on students and teachers.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 3906 would allow STAAR exams to be administered in multiple parts over more than one day. End-of-course assessments also could be administered in multiple parts over more than one day, and the requirement that the English I and English II end-of-year assessment instruments assess reading and writing in the same assessment instrument would be eliminated.

The bill would require that exams administered to students in grades 3 through 5 be developed so that 85 percent of students were able to complete all exams for that grade within an aggregate period equal to the number of assessment instruments for the grade multiplied by 120 minutes. Exams administered to students in grades 6 through 8 would have to be developed so that 85 percent of students were able to complete all exams for that grade within an aggregate period equal to the number of assessment instruments for that grade multiplied by 180 minutes.

These provisions would not apply to the classroom portfolio method used to assess writing performance. This assessment method also would be exempted from requirements governing the time of year during which STAAR and end-of-course assessments had to be administered if student performance under the method was less than 50 percent of a student's overall assessed performance in writing.

The classroom portfolio method used to assess the writing performance of significantly cognitively disabled students could require a teacher to prepare tasks and materials.

The bill would apply beginning with the 2019-2020 school year. The commissioner of education would be required to adopt rules as necessary to implement the bill's changes as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date.

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 \$9 million to general revenue related funds through fiscal 2020-21.