

SUBJECT: Requiring reporting on certain information regarding pre-k programs

COMMITTEE: Public Education — committee substitute recommended

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

0 nays

1 present not voting — Sanford

WITNESSES: For —David Feigen, Texans Care For Children; Nancy Tovar; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Cynthia Humphrey, Association of Substance Abuse Programs; Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Chandra Villanueva, Center for Public Policy Priorities; Steven Aleman, Disability Rights Texas; Lisa Flores, Easter Seals Central Texas; Karen Kelley, League of Women Voters of Texas; Christine Yanas, Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, Inc; Alissa Sughrue, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Texas; Will Francis, National Association of Social Workers -Texas Chapter; Bob Popinski, Raise Your Hand Texas; Ted Raab, Texas American Federation of Teachers; Lonnie Hollingsworth, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Linda Litzinger, Texas Parent to Parent; Clayton Travis, Texas Pediatric Society; Kyle Ward, Texas PTA; Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Texas State Teachers Association; Kyle Piccola, The Arc of Texas; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas)

Against — None

On — Jacquie Porter, Texas Education Agency; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Ami Cortes-Castillo, Austin ISD; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Eric Marin and Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency)

BACKGROUND: Education Code sec. 29.1532 requires school districts to provide information to the Texas Education Agency about their prekindergarten programs, including the number of half- and full-day prekindergarten classes the school district offers and the class size and ratio of staff to students for each class. This information is included in reports the agency is required to make available on its website.

Some have called for public schools and private providers of prekindergarten education programs to provide more information about class sizes and student-teacher ratios in order to help the state enhance prekindergarten program quality.

DIGEST: CSHB 55 would require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to instruct each school district that offered a prekindergarten program and each private entity that provided a prekindergarten program under contract with a school district to report information about the offered prekindergarten classes to TEA. The information would have to include:

- the number of students, certified teachers, and teacher's aides in each prekindergarten class offered by the district or private entity;
- whether each prekindergarten class was full-day or half-day; and
- if the district or entity offered half-day classes, whether two half-day classes were offered per day.

Based on the information provided, TEA would determine the total number of teachers and teacher's aides in prekindergarten classes in the state. To calculate the student-teacher ratio for each prekindergarten class offered by a school district or contracted private entity, TEA would count each teacher or teacher's aide once for a full-day class and twice for a half-day class if the district offered two half-day classes per day.

TEA would have to prepare and submit a report to the Legislature based on the information collected under the bill by August 1 of each year. The initial report would have to be submitted by August 1, 2020.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.