

SUBJECT: Adjusting the instructional days of a school district during a calamity

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 9 ayes — Dutton, Allen, Allison, K. Bell, Buckley, Huberty, K. King, Talarico, VanDeaver

0 nays

2 absent — Lozano, Meza

2 present not voting — Bernal, M. González

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 19 — 31-0

WITNESSES: For — None

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Eric Marin and Leonardo Lopez, Texas Education Agency)

BACKGROUND: Education Code sec. 48.005 outlines the average daily attendance guidelines for public schools and includes provisions for adjustments of the schedule by the commissioner of education.

To comply with health and safety guidelines at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Texas schools had to quickly transition to virtual instruction. To ensure that schools were able to continue operating despite a decline in their funding, the state offered a "hold harmless" agreement, which allowed districts to receive funding based on their historic average daily attendance trends. Some have called for providing for the adjustment of the average daily attendance of a school district on the basis of a calamity.

DIGEST: SB 1522 would establish that an adjustment of the average daily

attendance of a school district, in addition to providing the adjustment for the amount of instructional days during the semester in which a calamity first occurred, may only be provided based on a particular calamity for an additional amount of instructional days equivalent to one school year.

The bill would allow the commissioner of education to divide the adjustment between two consecutive school years.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.