

SUBJECT: Establishing provisions for certain prekindergarten classes

COMMITTEE: Public Education — committee substitute recommended

VOTE: 10 ayes — Buckley, Allen, Allison, Cunningham, Cody Harris, Harrison, Hinojosa, K. King, Longoria, Talarico

0 nays

3 absent — Dutton, Hefner, Schaefer

WITNESSES: For — Kathlyn McHenry, Early Care and Education Consortium; Amanda Pecina, Kindercare Learning Centers; Brian Gutman, Learning Care Group; Melissa Hoisington, Primrose Schools; Megan Mauro, Texas Association of Business (*Registered, but did not testify*: Amanda List, AList Consulting; Sharon Perry, Kids R Kids; Eric Knustrom, KinderCare Learning Centers; David Fincher, NCCC; Whitney Broughton, Texas Association of School Boards; Bryce Adams, Texas Public Charter Schools Association; Brenda Schultz, The Learning Experience; Seth Winick, The Learning Experience, Childcare Network, and Primrose Schools; Quynh-Huong Nguyen, Woori Juntos; and seven individuals)

Against — Tricia Cave, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Cody Summerville, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (*Registered, but did not testify*: Diane Goyette, Early Childhood Specialties LLC; Alejandro Pena, Texas American Federation of Teachers; Paige Williams, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Carrie Griffith, Texas State Teachers Association; and nine individuals)

On — Catherine Davis, Child Care Associates; Kimberly Kofron, Children at Risk; David Feigen, Texans Care for Children; Bryan Daniel, Texas Workforce Commission (*Registered, but did not testify*: Eric Marin, Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency)

BACKGROUND: According to Education Code section 29.167, a teacher working in a prekindergarten program must have one or more additional qualifications,

including at least eight years' experience of teaching in a nationally accredited child care program.

Some have suggested that revising qualifications required of prekindergarten teachers and requirements for entities that are contracted by school districts to provide programs could help expand access to prekindergarten services.

DIGEST: CSHB 2729 would amend the qualifications under which a teacher could be qualified to teach Pre-K to include at least eight years' experience in a Texas Rising Star program.

The bill also would create requirements for each prekindergarten teacher for a class provided by an entity with which a school district contracted, establishing that a teacher would be required to either have one of the qualifications established in code or be supervised by a person who met those requirements. A person who supervised a prekindergarten teacher could supervise multiple classes.

The bill would specify that an entity contracted to provide a Pre-K program would be required to attempt to maintain an average ratio of no less than one qualified teacher or teacher's aide for each 11 students. The condition that such a teacher be a "certified teacher" would be replaced with "qualified teacher."

The bill would apply beginning with the 2023-2024 school year.

This 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, 2023.