

- SUBJECT:** Creating a Joint Advisory Board for Education Research Centers
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Eissler, Hochberg, Allen, Aycock, Dutton, Guillen, Huberty, Shelton, T. Smith, Strama, Weber
- 0 nays
- WITNESSES:** For — None
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Gary Johnstone, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)
- BACKGROUND:** The education commissioner and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) operate three education research centers at the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Texas at Dallas, and Texas A&M University in College Station.
- The centers conduct research for the benefit of education in this state, including research relating to the impact of state and federal education programs, the performance of educator preparation programs, public school finance, and the best practices of school districts.
- The commissioner and THECB may accept gifts and grants to be used in operating the centers and can by rule impose reasonable fees for the use of a center's research, resources, or facilities. The centers must be funded entirely by gifts, grants, and fees.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 2365 would establish a Joint Advisory Board for Education Research Centers, chaired by the education commissioner and the higher education commissioner. The commissioners jointly would appoint a maximum of 10 additional members to the board to serve one-year terms at the pleasure of the commissioners. The board would have to meet at the call of the co-chairs at least twice each year. The board would have to adopt policies and:

- establish a schedule of fees to fund the cost of data processing by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and THECB;
- develop a plan for establishing access at public institutions of higher education to data;
- develop policies to give state agencies acting for a governmental purpose and public entities performing studies authorized by the Legislature priority in access to and use of center research;
- develop, in consultation with each center, a process for reviewing center research proposals and criteria for evaluating proposal quality that emphasized the benefits to education in this state and use of accepted social science research methods;
- identify, in consultation with each center, the type of data that the TEA and THECB send annually to each center without the necessity of a request for those data by a center and a schedule on which the data were sent; and
- perform other duties as necessary to advise each center.

Each center would have to review research proposals and forward proposals to the board that met the high-quality criteria set by the board. The commissioners could enter data agreements with another state agency and the state education agency of another state, giving priority to the agencies of states that sent the highest number of students to Texas or that received the highest number of students from Texas.

The commissioners could each delegate duties, including voting, to an employee of TEA or THECB, as appropriate. The bill would require education research centers to pay necessary personnel costs from gifts, grants, and fees.

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, 2011.

NOTES:

The companion bill, SB 1497 by Shapiro, was referred to the Senate Higher Education Committee on March 22.