

SUBJECT: Creating professional development academies for school counselors

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 11 ayes — Aycock, Allen, Bohac, Deshotel, Dutton, Farney, Galindo, González, Huberty, K. King, VanDeaver

0 nays

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify:* David Anderson, Arlington ISD Board of Trustees; Jon Fisher, Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas; Jason Sabo, Children at Risk; Jay Barksdale, Dallas Regional Chamber; Drew Scheberle, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; MaryAnn Whiteker, Hudson ISD; Mike Meroney, Huntsman Corp., BASF Corp., and Sherwin Alumina, Co.; Howell Wright, Huntsville ISD; CJ Tredway, Independent Electrical Contractors of Texas; Annie Spilman, National Federation of Independent Business Texas; Chris Shields, San Antonio Chamber of Commerce; Chanley Dollgener, Texas Council Association; Dwight Harris, Texas American Federation of Teachers; Nelson Salinas, Texas Association of Business; Felicia Wright, Texas Association of Builders; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Fred Shannon, Texas Association of Manufacturers; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Patrick Tarlton, Texas Chemical Council; Janna Lilly, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education; Jan Friese, Texas Counseling Association; Edward Hicks IV, Texas Counseling Association; Cyndi Matthews, Texas Counseling Association; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Kyle Ward, Texas Parent Teacher Association; Colby Nichols, Texas Rural Education Association; Maria Whitsett, Texas School Alliance; Portia Bosse, Texas State Teachers Association; Les Findeisen, Texas Trucking Association; LeAnn Solmonson, Texas Counseling Association; Monty Exter, the Association of Texas Professional Educators; Daniel Womack, the Dow Chemical Company; Max Jones, the Greater Houston Partnership; Grover Campbell, Texas Association of School Boards; Casey Smith, United Ways of Texas; and 23 individuals)

Against — None

On — Steve Swanson; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Charlotte Coffee; Steven Aleman, Disability Rights Texas; Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency)

BACKGROUND: Education Code, ch. 33, subch. A governs school counselors and counseling programs.

DIGEST: HB 18 would amend ch. 33 to require the commissioner of education to develop postsecondary education and career counseling academies for school counselors working at middle, junior high, or high schools. The commissioner would create these academies with input from school counselors, the Texas Workforce Commission, higher education institutions, and business and community leaders.

Academies would provide counselors with knowledge and skills to provide counseling to students on postsecondary success and career planning. A school counselor who attended the academy would be entitled to receive a stipend in an amount determined by the commissioner. Any stipend received could not be considered in determining whether a district was paying the school counselor the minimum monthly salary specified in statute.

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, 2015.

NOTES: According to the Legislative Budget Board's fiscal note, HB 18 would cost the state \$2.7 million in fiscal 2016-17.