

- SUBJECT:** Providing for endorsements for students enrolled in special education
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 12 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Allison, Ashby, K. Bell, M. González, K. King, Meyer, Sanford, Talarico, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Dutton
- WITNESSES:** For — Steven Aleman, Disability Rights Texas; Kristin Mcguire, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education; Kyle Piccola, The Arc of Texas; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Jacquie Benestante, Autism Society of Texas; Chris Masey, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Lisa Flores, Easter Seals Central Texas; Jolene Sanders, Easterseals Texas; Will Francis, National Association of Social Workers-Texas Chapter; Deborah Caldwell, North East Independent School District; Seth Rau, San Antonio ISD; Christine Broughal, Texans for Special Education Reform; Ted Raab, Texas American Federation of Teachers; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Grover Campbell, Texas Association of School Boards; Lonnie Hollingsworth, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Linda Litzinger, Texas Parent to Parent; Kyle Ward, Texas PTA; Dee Carney, Texas School Alliance; Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Texas State Teachers Association)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Eric Marin, Justin Porter, and Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code sec. 28.025(c-1) allows high school students to earn endorsements on their transcript by successfully completing curriculum requirements adopted by the State Board of Education. Sec. 28.025(c-2)

requires students to successfully complete four credits in mathematics, four credits in science, and two elective credits to earn an endorsement.

19 TAC ch. 89, subch. AA, sec. 89.1070 prohibits students receiving special education services from receiving an endorsement if the qualifying course curriculum was modified for a student.

DIGEST: HB 165 would allow a student enrolled in a special education program to earn an endorsement on the student's transcript if the student successfully completed, with or without modification:

- the curriculum requirements for the foundation high school program identified by the State Board of Education (SBOE); and
- the additional endorsement curriculum requirements listed in Education Code sec. 28.025(c-2).

The bill would require the student to complete all curriculum requirements for a specific endorsement adopted by the SBOE, either without modification or with modification if the modified curriculum was determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee to be sufficiently rigorous.

The admission, review, and dismissal committee also would determine whether the student was required to achieve satisfactory performance on an end-of-course assessment to earn an endorsement.

HB 165 would apply beginning with the 2019-2020 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, 2019.

SUPPORTERS SAY: HB 165 would allow students in special education programs to be provided with the same opportunities as their peers. It also would make students in special education programs more competitive applicants for admission to Texas universities.

HB 165 would bridge an equity gap in endorsements for students with disabilities by providing them the opportunity to show mastery in the rigorous course curriculum required of all students seeking an endorsement. Endorsements provide students with in-depth knowledge in their areas of interest and are a requirement for students seeking to earn the Distinguished Level of Achievement upon graduation, which is one eligibility requirement for automatic admission to a Texas public college or university.

Under existing law, students receiving a modified curriculum may not earn endorsements, which automatically prevents them from earning a Distinguished Level of Achievement. The bill would allow students in special education programs the opportunity to reach for the same outstanding performance enhancements as their peers.

OPPONENTS
SAY:

No concerns identified.